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THE DANCER AND THE LOOKING GLASS

A journey of inquiry concerning the relationships between the dancer, the camera, and the spectator in screendance.

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Abstract

This thesis concerns the relationship between the dancer, the camera, and the screen viewer in the making and watching of screendance. It documents a personal journey of exploration that has my own creative practice, located within the wider field of screendance, as a central thread.

The research identifies a divide, with respect to control and authorship, which exists between the performer on one side of the lens and filmmakers on the other. It explores, through practice, production methodologies that challenge and narrow this divide. It finds that the small scale, single-take, single mobile camera dancing/filming event can help close the divide between dancer, camera. The research also finds that there are significantly few screendance works that are made as single-take films. As a tangent to this finding, it also finds that screendance works, like in mainstream films, are trending towards increasingly short shot lengths.

In addition to the information that I bring together from films, theorists, and interviews, the thesis draws on nineteen short films that I have made as part of this research and concludes with the production of *The Glasshouse* (2016), a screendance that summarises a number of the core findings of *The Dancer and the Looking Glass*.

For my Father, who inspired me to ask questions.

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Acknowledgements

Publications

Chapter 5 of the thesis has been published as an article in *The Moving Image Journal and Arts Review*. Lewis-Smith, C. (2016). A Brief History of the Dancer/Camera Relationship, *The Moving Image Journal and Arts Review*, (Volume 5 Numbers 1 & 2), Pages 143-156.

Chapter 6 has been presented as a paper at The Third International Meeting of Screendance, Universitat Politecnica de Valencia, Spain (September 2016) and published in the proceedings.

The film *Six* (2015) was screened at the Loikka International Dance Film Festival (Helsinki 2015).

The film *The Glasshouse* (2016) is an Official Selection (Semi-Finalist) for Los Angeles Cinefest 2017, and an Official Selection for Tanzfilme, at the Regensberg International Short Film Week, Germany, 2017.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis stems from my interest in dance and filmmaking and investigates the relationship between the dancer, the camera, and the screen viewer in the making and watching of screendance. The thesis represents an exploration that draws on, and extends from, my own practice as a screendance maker. In the following chapters I locate and examine my practice alongside that of others, drawing of the theoretical and practical work of both past and current practitioners in the field. I examine films from mainstream cinema and those of a more avant-garde nature which have a primary focus on screendance, a term that I expand on in Chapter 1 to explain my use of it in preference to other names. I draw on a number of interviews with dancers and filmmakers and transcripts of these interviews are included as appendices.

In the early part of the thesis I identify a 'divide' that commonly exists between the performing dancer and the camera operator/director in screendance making. I suggest that in this context, the divide represents, through a separation of roles, an imbalance of authorship in production and postproduction, favouring those behind the lens over those who are in front of it. My findings suggest that this divide is narrower in production works where links to the dance community exist on both sides of the lens and where production environments do not involve large teams behind the camera. I identify this divide in a historical context, charting changes in the dancer/camera relationship from early films to the present. I find that this divide still persists between these more closely aligned groups and identify a number of filmmakers, including myself, who have developed alternative approaches to filming dance that challenges this divide.

Exploring alternative approaches is central to the research and is manifested in four practical research projects through which I sought to challenge the perceived divide in screendance production. In the first of these I placed myself as both filmmaker and improvising performer, in a dancing/filming event, in an attempt to narrow this divide by placing my own consciousness in both roles at the same time. In the second I did almost the opposite by constructing a production environment in which I sought to remove my consciousness as a filmmaker in a dancing/filming event. In the third, I sought to negate

this divide through creating a close relationship, as a camera operator, with a solo dancer, by exploring the dancing/filming event as a *pas de deux*. In the fourth I created a filmmaking environment in which the roles of dancer and filmmaker become interchangeable.

The enquiry extends to the screen viewing experience of screendance, which provides a means of reflecting on the effects of different dancer/camera relationships. My findings suggest that dancer/camera relationships that serve to close the divide between the dancer and camera can also affect the screen viewing experience, resulting in a relationship between performer, camera, and spectator that can be regarded as a *pas de trois*.

My journey, as represented by this thesis, leads to exploration of this relationship in the context of the long-take, and ultimately the single-take screendance production. My aim is not to suggest that any one model of screendance making are more or less effective in creating a product that is engaging for the ultimate viewer. It is rather to explore this particular one as it is the production technique that my exploration has led me to. My research finds that in contemporary screendance works, few films are made as single-takes using a mobile camera, and it is to this territory that this thesis leads. In examining long-take and single-take screendance works, the research for the thesis has resulted in a tangential avenue of inquiry that examines average shot lengths in screendance works. It has also led to a screendance teaching device called *The Looking Box*. Both of these are included as appendices.

This thesis forms two interweaving lines of enquiry that have guided my own filmmaking practice. They are the development of a system of screendance production that allows dancers and filmmakers to work as equal partners, and the creation of a screen viewing experience that brings the action that happened in front of the camera to the viewer in a manner that reflects a real experience. These two lines of enquiry ultimately led to the making of the film *The Glasshouse* (2016).

The aim of this research was to develop ways that I, as a filmmaker, could work with dancers in a manner that allowed for a greater sense of co-authorship and partnership than that which commonly exists in conventional screendance production. My aim has been to use my own screendance making practice as the core arena for this research, and to locate this in a wider field of knowledge, drawing on historical aspects of the dancer/camera relationship, on the work of artists, academics and theorists, and on films from mainstream

cinema and the avant-garde. As an extension of this research I have embraced the screen viewer as an essential element of the investigation as a means of looking back, via the viewing experience, at the dancing/filming event that it arose from.

Secondary questions have emerged during the research journey. The average shot lengths of screendances are examined against those of mainstream cinema, and in their own rights, to identify trends over the past fifteen years. This data is used in contrast to single-take screendances, which I identify as being an unusual production style. Different ways of using cameras in single-take screendance production are also explored, and the effects of how they impact on the screen viewing experience are analysed.

This research has its beginnings in my film and dance making practice. I have worked with film and dance for many years, recording live performance work and also working at the intersection of the two media as a form of integrated choreographic practice. In 2001, I was engaged in filming improvising dancers on the coast of Cornwall, UK. I became increasingly aware of how my presence, and that of my camera, impacted on the performances that I recorded. The space between the performers and myself was empty only in as much as is needed for a clear line of sight. Invisibly, this space was filled with awareness of each other's presence and, by design or otherwise, a choreographic relationship in which each of us interacted with the other. Between us, mediating contact, which at times included eye-to-eye contact through the lens, was the camera. Through this experience, I became increasingly aware that the camera, once out of the bag and brought into the dancing event, became a signifier of a complex set of meanings and relationships that were instantly present, as if an electrical circuit had been turned on bringing everything connected to it instantly to life.

The results of this phenomenon, switched on as it were for the duration of the dancing/filming event, were at their most apparent when I was working with dancers who were improvising (i.e. dancing in a way that does not adhere to a choreographic map as in pre-learned movement in a pre-learned order). In improvised dancing events, with the agenda of following a known movement path, the possibility exists for a more reactive state from which dance emerges. In the improvising dancing event the dynamics concerning this relationship are often more apparent than they are in a pre-choreographed event, during which they may be hidden behind a well-drilled act.

A certain balance of control became clear to me in these performance events. I call them performance events here as not only were the dancers performing but I was too, especially at times when my camera was hand held and I was moving in response to the choreography within the viewfinder. As a filmmaker I am able to exercise control of what is, and what is not, captured by the camera. Whilst the dancer him or herself makes choices as to how and when and where they move (the stimulus including all factors present at the event including the camera/camera operator), the filmmaker exercises control over the mediated dancer both at the moment of capture, and in the future, in the form of multiple potential viewings of the event at various times in various places. A dance may be re-interpreted through the way it is filmed and subsequently edited, and its newly fixed form becomes one over which the dancer may have little authority. In the research that is represented by this thesis I explored ways in which the balance of control in dancing filming events might be challenged and re-negotiated through production environments that redistribute authority.

CHAPTER 1. SCREENDANCE.

I begin with a clarification of the term 'screendance' in the context of this thesis.

> Definitions, that is, even when they are unsuccessful, as I suspect mine might be, can be illuminating. For definitions do not merely demarcate the boundary of a field from other fields, but they can reveal the intricate landscape within a field as well. (Carroll 2001, p.47).

Throughout this thesis I have used the term 'screendance' to define work arising from the intersection of dance and film/video. The term is potentially troublesome and I seek in this chapter to define its position in particular categories of artistic practice that concerns dance and film or video. I identify some ambiguity surrounding the term and will explain my choice of using it over other terms to describe the work examined in, and created as a part of, this thesis.

A number of terms currently present themselves in texts relating to artistic practice concerning dance and motion picture photography. Each term presented here signifies the

conjoining of dance and film or video, and each combination implies a subtly different emphasis, viz. dance on camera, video dance, dance for camera, dancefilm, cinedance, dance on film, moving picture dance, and screendance. While these are all terms that are used to describe products and collaborative acts between dance and filmmaking, each term suggests a slightly different emphasis.

Given that there exists, both historically and currently, a wide range of relationships between dance and filmmaking, and an equally wide range of resultant screen works, it would seem appropriate that there should be a number of terms to describe them. However, the terms mentioned above are used with a high degree of inter-changeability and often lack specific and distinct referents within the various dance/filmmaking relationships and products.

'Dance on camera' suggests a priority of the camera over the dance, a focus on a point somewhere between the dancer and the screen. The term 'on camera' draws attention to the filming event but suggests also that the dance is already *on* the camera, already captured. It does not reference an edited screen product, but rather emphasises one stage of a process that leads to it. The term is used by the Film Society of the Lincoln Centre, USA, for their annual festival that has been running since 1971, and so is very well established. However, for the purpose of this thesis I have chosen not to use this term, for there is a sense that it excludes the dancer and the ultimate screen viewer, both elements that the thesis discusses.

'Dance for camera' emphasises the filming event but prioritises the dance, as performed in front of the camera, as the focus of activity. There is a sense of dance's servility to the camera, just as a dance is performed *for* an audience, *for* their pleasure, *for* their enlightenment perhaps. The term might also suggest a different type of dancing to that done for a live audience, as suggested by filmmaker Margaret Williams who poses the question: What is special and different about dance made for the camera? (Williams. n.d.). As with 'dance on camera', the term lacks an inclusion of the final screen event as an element of the production.

 'Cinedance' references cinematic conventions and its culture in relation to dance. It is not a term widely used in the texts that this thesis draws on but is nonetheless one that circulates within the culture of work to which it references. The connection between cinema and dance here might suggest popular films that embrace dance as an element of their

makeup. On-line searches reveal a broad use of the title with a particular focus on The Netherlands where the term Cinedans refers to an annual film festival held there. [1]

'Video dance' highlights the technology of video, by prioritising 'video' as the modifying noun, suggesting a historical context, distancing current work from pre-video productions and more contemporary productions shot on film stock. The term video is used broadly, embracing both videotape and digital video. Katrina McPherson chose the term 'video dance' in her 2006 guide to making dance for the screen with the rationale that, 'the vast majority of people making this kind of work are now doing so using digital video technology at some, if not all, of the production stages'. (McPherson 2006, p.xxx). McPherson's guide concerns the complete creative process of filmmaking; the term 'Video Dance', however, does not simply suggest the act of filming, as might 'dance for camera', but might embrace the process of editing and screening in a way that 'dance on camera' and 'dance for camera' do not. In addition, the term hints at the medium as a choreographic tool by suggesting dance existing *as* video, a medium for manipulating action.

'Dancefilm' may embrace both film and video. The term *film* is less media specific than *video*. 'Films' are screened in cinemas without reference to the medium that they are shot in, whereas *videos* are associated with the format of video. Brannigan uses the term 'dancefilm' as, 'a modality that appears across various types of films including the musical and experimental shorts and is characterized by a filmic performance dominated by choreographic strategies or effects' (Brannigan 2011, p.vii). Reflecting Brannigan's choice of terms, Dodds finds the term 'dance film' useful as one that refers to a broad range of work and 'video dance' one that refers specifically to 'choreography designed for the television camera' (Dodds 2004, p.xv). As with the term 'videodance' there are no prepositions between the nouns to generate a relationship between them (as in dance *on* camera). However, the word *dance* becomes a descriptor in its position preceding the word film, and thus the term dancefilm suggests a film with dancing in it, the product a of filmmaking process that is revealed on a screen.

In the context of the terminologies listed here, the terms 'video' and 'film' highlight issues that extend beyond references to the material of video and film themselves. Misek notes how the arrival of video in the late 1960s impacted not only on the nature of capturing the moving image through the camera but also on where, and the way, it was viewed (Misek. 2015). The association of 'film' being something projected onto a screen was disturbed by

the possibility of moving images being viewable electronically on a monitor through 'video'. Misek suggests that that the terms now cross-reference one another with the term 'film' varying according to the context in which it is being used. For example, it still references the original cellulose material wound on a spool and mechanically run through a projector, but has also evolved to reference creative forms. For example, the production qualities associated with a family home movie might not qualify it to be called a film, or its maker qualified to be called a filmmaker, but an 'accomplished' commercial work screened in a cinema would be called a film, even if it were shot on video. Not withstanding the layers of meaning touched on here, the terms 'video dance' and 'dance film' both reference an end product, and as such I have avoided their use unless I reference the work of others who use the terms.

Noel Carroll proposed the term 'moving picture dance' as a term that reflects a broad range of possible approaches (Carroll 2001, p.47). The term favours the end result of the dancer/filmmaker collaboration, but embraces a wide range of possible creative outcomes. He suggests that other existing terms have the effect of narrowing the field and excluding innovative approaches that may be in conflict with a defining term, and proposes 'moving picture dance' as one that would help define a dance/filmmaking relationship not only in an academic context, but also in the wider field of creative practice and screening. He uses the example of the term 'cine-dance', suggesting that computer animated dance might be excluded from festivals that call out for this category of work and that, as technology presents new opportunities for dance, such terms may not embrace innovative practice that uses it (Carroll 2001, p.47).

Like dance film and video dance, Carroll's term favours the end point of the filmmaking process. Dancer/writer Jenelle Porter uses the term 'dance with camera' in her 2009 book of the same name (Porter 2009), a term which references the other end of the process, the dancing filming event. This term is in some ways more closely allied to the content of my thesis as, in Chapters 2, 3 and 4, I examine the dancer camera relationship in detail, but elsewhere, particularly in Chapter 5, I examine the viewer's experience of the final screen product, and the term in this respect becomes restrictive.

All of the above terms are broadly representative of work at the intersection of dance and motion picture photography. Each term brings with it a suggestion of what it may prioritise

by its definition, what it may include, and equally what it may exclude. None of the terms suggest a particular type of dancing, or how much dancing there may be in relation to non-dance elements of the film. Only 'dance for camera' and 'dance with camera' prioritise the 'live' dancing that is filmed; all other terms reference activity between the camera in operation and the final screened product.

With each term referencing something slightly different, to establish a single name that covers all might be considered ultimately futile, and perhaps even unhelpful. There exists such a broad range of practice at the intersection of filmmaking and dance, that a single defining term that covered all would describe little. However, with shifting definitions attached to the terminology listed above, it would be confusing to jump from one term to another over the course of this thesis. Theorist and director Douglas Rosenberg observes how:

> At the moment, within the field, there are no clear definitions or boundaries for the terminology commonly used to describe the various subcategories of screendance, resulting in a lack of clarity and slippage in regard to both meaning and context. (Rosenberg 2012, p.4)

None of the above mentioned terms quite encapsulate the focus of my thesis. For the purposes of this research, I align myself with Rosenberg, choosing 'screendance' as an overarching term to embrace the other terms. The term discards reference to specific 'media', but like Carroll's term, it suggests a greater weighting of the end point over its medium of delivery, the emphasis being on the screened work rather than the process of its creation. As such, the literal interpretation of the term falls short of defining the different areas covered in the following chapters, but the term has gained currency in the developing discourses and critiques surrounding dance and film.

Rosenberg notes: 'Screendance, then, though not a perfect term, implies that the method of apprehension (the screen) modifies the activity it inscribes (dance); in doing so it codifies a particular space of representation and by extension, meaning' (Rosenberg 2012, p.3). While the term may be imperfect, it serves as a broad enough signifier to embrace a range of approaches at different times, past and present, whilst gaining credence as a term within. Whilst dance itself is codified into subcategories (ballet, jazz, contemporary, tap etc), the same cannot yet be said about the classifications of screendance, and thus its commentary lacks an established database of terminology through which to easily identify its

subcategories. In my conclusion to this thesis I note how innovative practice with emerging technologies are presenting new possibilities in the field, challenging current definitions, or demanding new ones. Carroll notes how the identification of parameters through a defining term can be:

> A powerful way to learn about the contours of a field […] weighing the strengths and weaknesses of alternate and even rival proposals – we come to recognise the complexity of the field, since different definitions will highlight certain tendencies in the work in question' (Carroll 2001, p.46).

The term 'screendance' then, provides at least a single term under which different practices can be described and compared. Carroll's proposal of motion picture dance as a term to serve this purpose appears not to have rooted. The term 'screendance' however is perhaps having more success in the English language discourses on the subject. The International Journal of Screendance was launched in 2010 with a stated mission to:

> *The International Journal of Screendance* will engage in rigorous critique grounded in both pre-existing and yet to be articulated methodologies from the fields of dance, performance, visual art, cinema and media arts, drawing on their practices, technologies, theories and philosophies. The Journal will provide a new frame through which Screendance will be examined in the context of contemporary cultural debates about interdisciplinarity, artistic agency, practice as theory, and curatorial practices (The International Journal of Screendance 2010).

The establishment of this forum foregrounds the term 'screendance' and, by design or default, establishes this term as one recognised in the academy. The journal already represents a considerable body of work and presents current dialogue amongst practitioners and academics. The term is broad enough to embrace film and video and does not reference cinema or any particular format or environment of presentations.

The term's emphasis on final artefact might be deemed inappropriate in a research enquiry that embraces practice as well as completed screen work. However, the term's attachment to the developing academic culture associated with the intersecting practices of filmmaking and dancing, renders it appropriate for this thesis. Before continuing, I need to briefly clarify

how this term is used in this thesis. Academic and screen dance artist Liz Aggiss is one of the founders of the journal. She proposes that:

> Screendance is dance made especially for the camera or screen where choreography and screen practice reside together. It is about inventing a movement language that can only exist on and for the screen. The main concern is movement, which could be from traditional or recognisable dance steps to choreographed car chases, movement from an archive or other sources, dancing JCB diggers or gun fights *(Aggiss 2008, p.3)*.

Aggiss also acknowledges other terminology that resides in the same field: 'It is useful to note that screen dance as a developing art form is sometimes called Dance for Camera, Screen Choreography, Video Dance or Dance Film' (Aggiss 2008, p.3).

Aggiss' here proposes 'screendance' as a term that refers to process, the *'inventing [of] a movement language'*, essentially the creative action that is central to production and leads to the screened product, a broad definition that dispenses with the need for a body. She also notes how the term refers to a '*developing art form'*. Given that the development of any art form must go back to its origins, Aggiss' description must include works of a historic nature. These might for example include Hollywood products from the likes of director choreographer Busby Berkeley, and films that star dancers like Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly. In addition, as used both by Aggiss and me, the term includes the more avant-garde works by filmmaker artists like Maya Derren, with whose work contemporary practices like my own are more aligned. Following Aggiss' statement, I use the term 'screendance' as a broad descriptor that embraces a wide range of creative practice at the intersection of dance making and filmmaking.

Mary Wycherley, co-curator of Limerick's Lightmoves Festival of Screendance proposes a description of screendance as:

> The bringing together of the two forms of dance and film. Screendance looks at how movement and sound can speak as opposed to dialogue. It is through the medium of dialogue that we would mostly see how film is communicated. Screendance is the translation of movement into the medium of film (Wycherley 2015).

Works referred to in this thesis tend to be, but are not exclusively, 'shorts': films typically under 20 minutes duration. My own filmmaking practice, which forms a significant element of this thesis, falls into this category. I draw on both historical and contemporary works to help identify dancer camera relationships.

The establishment of *The International Journal of Screendance* in 2010 represented a significant milestone in the discourse surrounding the dance/film relationship. The introduction to this first volume promotes the journal as a means of supporting scholarship 'intended to expand the parameters of what may currently be considered screendance' (Rosenberg & Kappenberg 2010, p1). Rosenberg and Kappenberg here question perceptions of screendance through asking if screendance needs to look like dance. Kappenberg's provocation responds to both the lack of clear parameters indicted by the range of terms discussed above, and to the broad range of work made by filmmakers, nominally avant-garde artists, which is increasingly embraced by the community of dance filmmakers, curators, and academics, but may not include the dancing body, or the human body at all. Anna Heighway, writing for *The International Journal of Screendance* uses the term 'The Republic of Screendance' (Heighway, 2014. p44) as acknowledgement of this community and its associated concepts and questions surrounding just what dance *is* in the context of film. As the concept of a 'republic' challenges traditional models of what dance might be and might not be in screen terms, historical works that have no dancers in them become candidates for 'screendance' through their choreographic sensibilities. Fernand Léger's *Ballet Mécanique* (1924) is composed of moving machinery and Joris Ivens's *Phillips Radio* (1931) comprises moving machines and factory workers. Both films respond to Brannigan's description of 'dance film' as work, 'characterized by a filmic performance dominated by choreographic strategies or effects' (Brannigan, 2011. pvii), and might be included in Heighway's re-classification, as may be numerous others made by artists and industrial filmmakers throughout the 20th century. More recently, the work of Siobhan Davis and David Hinton (*Birds* 2000. *All This Can Happen* 2012) continues the exploration of screen choreography without dancers, challenging and re-shaping the notion of screendance. I include this clarification, because although the investigation in *The Dance and the Looking Glass* acknowledges work of this nature, it excludes it as a focus, both in the written and practical elements of the thesis, because it primarily concerns the dancer/camera relationship. In the specific case of this thesis, while acknowledging this braoder use, I use the term more specifically to refer to film that has as its subject the dancer who deliberately dances for all or a significant part of the work.

In addition to the above clarification of my use of the term screendance, I wish also to draw attention to the term 'mainstream cinema', which I also use. In the context of this thesis, I use the term to refer to commercial films distributed to cinemas, usually shortly after their release, for popular consumption. I use the term broadly, and generally in opposition to avant-garde and experimental films, though I also acknowledge that there exists a wide area of overlap between the two.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: page 151. FILMOGRAPHY: page 161.

CHAPTER 2. A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

A brief history of the dancer/camera relationship with a focus on a perceived divide existing between those in front of and those behind the camera.

The advancement of chemical technology's ability to fix a reaction to light in the late nineteenth century brought with it the shooting and projecting of the first films. The compatibility of dance and film, each sharing concerns with the design of movement in time and space, was obvious to early filmmakers and so dance quickly became one of the prime candidates for filming. Arguably the earliest surviving screendance can be witnessed in the flickering images of *Annabelle's Serpentine Dance* (1894), filmed in Thomas Edison's Black Maria Studio, directed by William Dickson and William Heise (who was also producer and camera operator) and distributed by the The Edison Manufacturing Company. More than one version of the film was made, but the first 45 second long version consists of a skirt dance[1] performed by Annabelle Moore in the style of the then popular dancer Loïe Fuller.

As already evidenced by this early film, the cinema screen made possible an alternative site for performance, hitherto the dominion of the stage; a shift was able to take place, from a performer's perspective, from a performer/audience relationship to a performer/camera relationship. This chapter reflects on this relationship between dancer and camera. It identifies a divide that commonly exists between the performing dancer and the camera operator/director in screendance-making and suggests that this divide is narrower in

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production works where links to the dance community exist on both sides of the lens and where production environments do not involve large teams behind the camera.

This divide is examined in a historical context, and changes in the dancer/camera relationship are charted with examples from early films such as Thomas Edison's Black Maria Studio productions through the choreography of Busby Berkeley in the 1930s, Maya Deren's screendance experiments in the 1950s, Merce Cunningham's collaborations with Charles Atlas in the 1970s, and concluding in the present with works by practitioners such as Katrina McPherson and Margaret Williams, as well as my own practice. Drawing on the testaments of historical and contemporary theorists and first-hand accounts by dancers such as Alice Barker, Gene Kelly and Cathy Nicoli, the research undertaken here suggests that the dancer/camera/director divide still persists, even in the more closely aligned groups working in smaller production environments today. However, my research identifies a number of filmmakers who, with the advent of new technologies, have developed an alternative approach to filming dance that challenges those structural and hierarchical divisions.

Screendance director David Hinton observes how:

> On a very fundamental level, making a film and making a dance are a very similar kind of activity; they're both about giving structure to action. If you think of film as just a formal language, and you forget about the acting and the talking you can look at any film as a dance film. All films take images of action and try to put these images together in a rhythmic and expressive way. In this sense film and dance work along the same lines (Hinton 2006).

Hinton's statement is also applicable to early films where there was no talking, or diegetic sound. Shot with static cameras, physical action in these films was the primary communicator of meaning and viewers experienced narrative through choreography of the body. Commonly shot in a single-take, early films gave structure to action by creating a beginning, middle and an end, and composed a viewing frame that ascribed spatial relationships to the body.

As described above, *Annabelle's Serpentine Dance* is shot in a single take by a static camera placed in front of the dancer, replicating a theatre audience's physical position and experience of a 'real time' continuous dancing event, unbroken by editing. In the last

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moment of the film, as Moore travels sideways across the stage, she appears to look at the camera, perhaps acknowledging its presence and thus, in the viewing experience, ourselves. Whether Moore was simply making eye contact in the direction of the camera, as she might with a live audience, or whether she was aware of the future audiences via the camera lens, who even now continue to watch the *Serpentine Dance*, is not possible to know, but the moment at least demonstrates her awareness of the camera's presence. This apparent camera acknowledgement in this dancer/camera relationship, and the single-take nature of the film, are elements that are discussed in later chapters of this thesis.

Annabelle's Serpentine Dance highlights the then new performance site of the screen, where the performer/audience relationship radically changed from that of an exchange within the same time and space, as in a live theatre, to one that lay separated by time and space, connected by a transitional realm unseen and uncontrolled by either in which that which moved for the camera could be re-organised and then re-presented over and over again at multiple sites. The performer could only imagine their connection to an audience, somewhere in the future beyond the eye of the camera.

Films like *Annabelle's Serpentine Dance* emerged into a visual entertainment world where audiences were eager for magic and illusion[3]. Whereas today's film audiences are familiar with on-going technological advances, and indeed may expect them to supersede the last viewing experience, sequel by sequel, the advent of cinema at the turn of the century must have seemed a big leap forward from the magic lantern shows that preceded it.[i] Reflecting on a screening of the Lumiere brother's *Arrival of a Train at the Station* at The Grande Café in Paris in 1895, Tom Gunning suggests that although it would seem unlikely that the spectators 'reared back in their seats, or screamed, or got up and ran from the auditorium […] there is no question that a reaction of astonishment, or even a type of terror accompanied many early projections… [It is a] well-attested fact that [they] caused shock and astonishment, an excitement pushed to the point of terror' (Gunning 1994, p.114).

The shift from live stage performance in the theatre auditorium to that of its mediated re-presentation on a cinema screen was important for audiences and performers alike. Writing in 1916, Luigi Pirandello expressed disquiet concerning the impact of the camera on the performer, making the transition from stage to screen via devices that allowed others to manipulate and 'replay' that which had been hitherto theirs by sole ownership.

The screen actor […] feels as if exiled. Exiled not only from the stage but from his own person. With dim disquiet he senses the inexplicable emptiness that results from his body becoming a withdrawn symptom, from its dissipating and being robbed of its reality, its life, its voice, and the sounds it makes by moving around, reduced to a mute image that flickers on a screen for an instant, then disappears into thin air. (Pirandello 2009, p.242)

Pirandello implies, in dramatic terms, that performers perceived the camera to be a threat to the integrity of stage performance. Pirandello nevertheless makes a point that may be considered no different now than it was then, namely that of a separation between performer and audience being a result of the process of filmmaking. Since the 1980s, a number of screendance-makers [be consistent in how you use terms] have invested in the development of a practice that narrows the divide that Pirandello talks about. This will be discussed later in this chapter.

Dickson and Heise were among a number of early filmmakers who embraced dance as a subject matter for their work. Initially, they used the new medium to document existing dances. Films survive of performances by the ballerinas Anna Pavlova and Vera Karalli who embodied Fokine's *Dying Swan* in 1907 and 1914 respectively, and a number of works survive that depict the dance crazes of the 1920s when dances like the Charleston and The Black Bottom were popular in Europe and the USA. These films were generally shot from a 'front on' perspective, wide enough to include all of the dancing body, head to toe. As such, those films that survive provide rare documentation of these dance forms. Other early filmmakers using dance as subject also drew on the associated choreographic principles of rhythm, repetition and movement trajectory in the construction of their films. George Méliès made highly choreographic films, reflecting Hinton's observation that: 'films take images of action and try to put these images together in a rhythmic and expressive way' (Hinton, 2006) and Méliès regularly used dancers to perform in his 'Fantasy Films'. Both can be clearly seen in his 1903 film *Le Cake Walk Infernal*, in which the entire narrative is danced. Filmed from a single viewpoint, the dancing is in the style of music hall entertainment, complete with a high stepping chorus line and comical dancing demon figures.

Two decades after the first known public exhibition of projected films with diegetic sound, which took place at The Paris Exposition in 1900, the movie industry moved into the era of the 'talkies' (Altman, 2004, p.158). The first noteworthy commercial feature length film

presenting synchronised sound was Warner's 1928 release *The Jazz Singer* (Juddery, 2010). Up until this point, movement was the main commonality between cinema and live theatre, with 'speech' for film largely limited to written text intertitled onto the screen after the actor's lips had finished moving, and, less frequently, the presence of text within the diegesis, as in Murnau's *Faust* 1926. [4] The advent of the talkies was perhaps less of an advantage for the speechless nature of dancing than it was for acting. Music that may have been played live to accompany dancing could now become embedded as a soundtrack, but for actors a greater part of their performing presence, their voices, would now reach their audience.

Murmurings of disquiet about the separation between performer and audience persisted however. Commenting on this emerging era of cinema in his 1936 essay 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', Walter Benjamin makes a similar point to Pirandello concerning the performer's relationship with an audience (Benjamin 2009). In spite of diegetic sound, he asserts that this relationship is altered in its transference from the stage to the screen. Although taking a more measured line than Pirandello, he highlights what he also perceives to be a negative aspect of the performer's mediation. 'The screen actor' he writes, 'by not presenting his performance to the audience in person, is deprived of the possibility open to the stage actor of adapting that performance to the audience as the show goes on' (Benjamin 2009, p.244). Benjamin suggests that an actor, when performing for the camera, is constantly aware of an alienation from their audience. He suggests that this awareness:

> …never leaves the screen actor, not for a moment. The screen actor is conscious, all the while he is before the camera, that in the final analysis he is dealing with the audience: the audience of consumers who constitute the market. That market, which he is entering not merely with his labour, but with his very presence, his whole physical being, is quite as intangible, so far as he is concerned at the time of the performance dedicated to it, as in any article produced in a factory (2009, p.244).

Both Pirandello and Benjamin's observations suggest that the relationship between the camera and the performer got off to an exciting, but at times uneasy, start. Couched in negative terms, they reference the distance between performer and audience and the uncertainty, for the performer, of just who that audience is. This holds as good now as it did then, as any future audience can only exist in the performer's imagination. If the destination

of a film is a specific and perhaps limited one, and the performer knows the details of that destination, then that audience may become, at least to some degree, tangible. Beyond that, the audience of the future is intangible. More tangible as audience is the camera operator, and any others present at the actual dancing/filming event. This relationship may be widely variable, depending on the nature of the event. The performer's relationship with the single camera operator and director will be different from a relationship with an extensive film crew on set. Though the former relationship may hold the possibilities of a more personal and collaborative exchange, issues concerning the impact of camera presence remain, as I will expand on shortly, even in this more intimate production environment.

The Hollywood film industry was quick to incorporate dance into its generic repertoire, and by the 1930s it was at the core of many full-length feature films. Styles broadly reflected those associated with stage musicals in which action moved seamlessly between dancing, singing, and acting, to create a world where all three had equal value. The single-take of the *Serpentine Dance* films was by now replaced by sophisticated camera use and editing. Particularly pioneering in this respect was the work of director and choreographer Busby Berkeley, whose Hollywood filmmaking career spanned 43 years (1933–1976). Berkeley constructed shots that could never be seen from a conventional audience perspective. These included his signature camera angle of the 'top shot', a bird's eye view looking down onto the dancers from above, and shots from highly mobile cameras. This is demonstrated in *I Only Have Eyes for You* (Berkeley 1934) where the camera travels amongst the dancers, then pulls out and up looking down from above them, and then returns down to a place partly behind the set from where the dancers are viewed as if from a hidden position, all in a single take.

In his films, Berkeley commonly mobilised dozens of female dancers who frequently make eye contact with the camera. The eye-to-eye interaction in Berkeley's films has a similar feel to the way performers in a musical stage show might connect with audiences, delivering their performances downstage, facing and gesturing out to the audience, just as Moore appears to do in *Annabelles Serpentine Dance*. Though many of Berkeley's films have the hallmarks of the stage musical (e.g. *Palmy Days* 1931), they also have scenes that cut from one unconventional perspective to another. Though Berkeley remained working in the musical genre, this aspect of his work, already evident in his early directing (*e.g. Gold Diggers*, 1935) represented a major shift in the way dance was seen on screen.

The camera increasingly became a participant in the dance and, in a sense, was liberated from a representation of the standard auditorium viewpoint.

Figure.1. *Palmy Days* (Berkeley 1931).

In their well-drilled performances, Berkeley's uncredited professional dancers give nothing away concerning their feelings of being filmed. Their cheeky winks to the camera and their never-wavering smiles present an outward appearance that suggests an untroubled confidence and an intimate awareness of their audience's presence. If Berkeley's dancers felt 'the sense of unease' that Pirandello suggests must be present when 'facing a film camera', their professionalism hid it well. Performing in Berkeley's films may have been good for a dancer's career enhancement, but film scholar Imogen Sarah Smith suggest that they did not enjoy an easy time during filming: 'His chorus girls are drilled to machine like precision and deserve credit for enduring exceptionally gruelling rehearsals and shoots' (Smith 2012).

Berkeley's contemporary, dancer and director Gene Kelly, indicated that the dancer/camera relationship remained, for him at least, one which still estranged the audience:

You're with the audience in the theatre. You look at them and you can embrace them and they can embrace you so to speak, or you can hate each other, but you get no direct response from the screen. It is so remote from the empathy of the live theatre (cited by Genne 2003, p.75).

Kelly started his performance career on the Broadway stage and then made the transition to film. As both performer and later film director, he was familiar with the filmmaking environment from both sides of the camera, and yet from this statement one can perceive a sense of dissatisfaction with the camera as a substitute for a live audience.

Kelly, whose screen debut *For Me and My Gal* (1942) Berkeley co-directed, was one of a number of dancers who appeared in the proliferation of film musicals over the 1940s and 1950s in the USA. However, Kelly was unusual in that he took a directing role in some of his own films, notably *Singing in the Rain* (1952), which he co-directed with Stanley Donen, and was familiar with dancing on stage, dancing for camera, and directing. The same was true of Fred Astaire who both directed and performed in his films, but for the majority of performers, many of whom were skilled dancers who attained high status in popular entertainment, artistic contribution ended when the cameras ceased to roll. The separation between the performers on one side of the lens and the directors and their teams on the other mirrors the isolation that Kelly's statement implies.

Dancer Alice Barker, born in 1912, danced in films with Bill 'Bojangles' Robinson, Gene Kelly, and Frank Sinatra. In an interview, at the age of one hundred and two, Barker expressed how much she had loved her work: 'I used to often say to myself I am being paid to do something that I enjoy doing and I would do it for free' (Tenfresh 2015). She also said how the filmmakers misspelt her name: 'All of the time. They'd leave out the middle R' (Tenfresh 2015)). During the interview Barker watched herself on film for the first time. This may not have been unusual at the time, but this information hints at a sense of distance between Barker as a dancer and all that followed the dancing/filming event, including even the final screening of the film.

Alongside the developments in Hollywood, a number of avant-garde artists who embraced filmmaking experimented with dance. In 1928, Sergei Diaghilev projected a background of clouds, stars, and an unfolding flower created by time-lapse photography, behind the

performers in his production of Leonide Massine's ballet *Ode*. In 1945 artist, poet and filmmaker Maya Deren directed *A Study in Choreography for the Camera*, a work that she described as, 'a dance so related to camera and cutting that it cannot be performed as a unit anywhere but in this particular film'. (Deren 1991, p.41). Although this work is her only film made with a dancer, a strongly choreographic quality is also evident in her other films. For example, *Meshes of The Afternoon* (1943) and *At Land* (1944) both use movement of the body, often through close-ups of parts of the body and through shadows, as the primary language to convey emotion and narrative. Deren has been considered an innovator in the avant-garde film movement (Greenfield, 2003, p.21) and *A Study in Choreography for the Camera* represents a milestone in the history of screendance. Like Berkeley, Deren strove to emancipate the camera from the theatrical tradition of an audience perspective (Deren, 2005, p.221), but she also aspired to create a mutual understanding between the filmmaker and the choreographer/dancer. In *A Study in Choreography for the Camera* Deren considered that relationship to be a *pas de deux*, noting that: 'These choreographies for camera are not dances recorded by the camera, they are dances choreographed for and performed by the camera and by human beings together' (Deren 1991, p.251). Deren describes *A Study in Choreography for the Camera* as a film that she and dancer Talley Beatty made *'together'* (Deren 1991, p.221). Some of Beatty's choreography is filmed in different locations and then manipulated in post-production to make it appear, through a linking movement, as if he is transported from one place to another through, for example, a single jump. At another point, Beatty turns continually, spotting a point left of camera on each three hundred and sixty degree rotation. Deren, hand cranking the camera, reduced the frame rate as he spun round resulting in Beatty appearing, on screen, to speed up. Deren and Beatty in this sense co-create the dance for the screen.

Though Deren's camerawork might be considered as experimental as Berkeley's, the close dancer/camera relationship in her film could be regarded as the opposite. Deren and Berkeley both used the camera as a participant in the choreographic event that was being filmed, and both filmed with a single camera. Deren, in her comparatively small-scale work, considered her performer as a partner in the creative process. Berkeley however had so many dancers in his works that this relationship would have been impossible. His dancers were skilful performers, as can be seen from their accomplishment of the complex tasks performed in his choreography, but ultimately the dancers were each a section of Berkeley's kaleidoscopic patterns. Elizabeth Zimmer suggests that Berkeley saw and portrayed his dancers in a conventional manner for the period, 'at ironing boards or vanity

tables, in beds and bathtubs' (Zimmer 2003, p.69). She goes on to suggest that Berkeley felt that there was 'safety, apparently, in numbers; whereas a single woman might be perceived as a threat or need to be acknowledged as a person, dozens of women could be shaped into brilliant abstract patterns' (Zimmer 2003, p.69).

In 1924, Fernand Leger applied choreographic principles of rhythm and movement in his film *Ballet Mécanique*, a sixteen-minute kaleidoscope of movement created by machines, people, and by the camera itself**.** By the 1930s a number of industrial filmmakers emerged in Britain whose work similarly employed these principles, straddling the genres of documentary, corporate, and experimental filmmaking. The General Post Office, Railway companies, and Shell were noteworthy in this area. An example of this is *Night Mail* (1936): made by the GPO film unit, it takes the journey of the London to Glasgow Royal Mail train as its narrative. The film is highly rhythmical, especially in its last section when W.H.Auden's poetry is read to the rhythms of the speeding train and accompanied by music from Benjamin Britten as it climbs a last long gradient of the track before arriving at Glasgow. The film cuts from one movement action to another, from the swinging movement of coal being shovelled into the train's firebox to the pumping pistons and connecting rods of the train wheels, from a dog running beside the train in one direction to the landscape rushing by in another. Like Leger's *Ballet Mécanique, Night Mail* takes advantage of the organised movement associated with industry. Director Geoffrey Jones is noteworthy in this respect. From the 1950s to the 1970s Jones made films for Shell, BP, and British Transport (e.g *Shell Panorama* 1959 and *Rail* 1966). His films are all cut to music and use the organising principle of rhythm and movement trajectory in their construction. [5]

In Europe, while Hollywood productions like *The Band Wagon* (Vincente Minnelli 1953) and *Singing in the Rain* (Gene Kelly and Stanley Donen 1952) drew on a stage musical tradition, from which they were often adapted, the earlier 1948 British production *The Red Shoes,* co-directed by Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger, was more in keeping with the later Hollywood films of the 1970s and 1980s when there was a shift away from the musical tradition. In these films, characters dance as a means of developing the plot, because it is something that they did as part of their daily lives[ii]. *The Red Shoes* is the story of a professional ballerina (Moira Shearer) ; the dancing scenes are of her on stage or in rehearsal. Similarly, an even earlier European film, *La Mort du Cygne* (Jean Benoît-Lévy, 1937) is set in the world of ballet dancers where dance student Rose Souris aspires to stardom as a professional dancer. *La Mort du Cygne,* was remade in the USA in 1947 as

The Unfinished Dance directed by Henry Koster. As with *The Red Shoes, La Mort du Cygne* has dance as central to the plot rather than dance as a component of the overall performance style.

During the 1960s, films in the style of the Hollywood musicals of the previous decade, in which the pedestrian movement of acting and acts of dancing are exchangeable as the common storytelling language, continued to be made. Examples of these are *West Side Story* (Robert Wise and Jerome Robbins, 1961), *Mary Poppins* (Robert Stevenson, 1964) , *The Sound of Music* (Robert Wise, 1965) and *Finian's Rainbow* (Francis Ford Coppola , 1968). Other films, more avant-garde in style, were also made at this time. *Nine Variations on a Dance Theme* (Hilary Harris, 1965) was one of these and will be discussed later in this chapter and again in Chapter 6. In the following year Canadian animator Norman McLaren directed *Pas de Deux* (1966), an innovative work that used the technique of chronophotography, in which individual film frames are physically layered on top of one another creating two images in one frame. The effect is one in which the dancers appear to leave traces of themselves behind as they move, momentarily suspending their bodies in time.

Dance makers themselves, who were a part of the cultural incubator of Lower Manhattan during the 1960s, were also experimenting with film. A key figure was Tricia Brown, who collaborated with artist/filmmaker Robert Whitman to produce *Homemade* (1966). *Homemade* brought dancer and film projection together by means of Brown performing with a projector strapped to her back. As Brown performed, the projector cast the film of the dance that Whitman had made into the performance space. Brown's movement was transferred to the projection apparatus, moving the filmed dance in a way that was controlled by the originator of the choreography, the dancer herself.

In the 1970s and into the 1980s, Hollywood continued to make dance orientated films but dancing and acting tended to become less interchangeable languages in terms of plot progression and dance films more reflected the structures of *The Red* Shoes as described above. In *Saturday Night Fever* (John Badham 1977) for example, John Travolta dances when he goes to the discotheque, a place where you do dancing, and in *Flashdance* (Adrian Lyne 1983) Alex Owens (Jennifer Beals) dances tirelessly because it is her ambition to become good enough to be a professional dancer. Other films that reflect this

shift include *Cabaret* (Bob Fosse 1972), *Fame* (Alan Parker 1980), *Footloose* (Herbert Ross 1984), and *Dirty Dancing* (Emile Ardolini1987).

Where Berkeley's films willingly take the viewer into a spectacle that abstracts the dancing body into a unit within a kaleidoscopic pattern, films such as *Dirty Dancing* seek to represent the possibility of 'real' dancing events cohering into a believable story. Where Berkeley's sets often mirror stage environments, the later narrative films locate the action within representations of 'real' places. This is not to say that camera work in these films is restricted to the eye level view of human perception. There are a significant number of low-level shots that focus on feet and legs in many of them, emphasising the impressive footwork associated with the dances. For example, the opening sequence of *Saturday Night Fever* focuses on John Travolta's feet walking purposely along a pavement. The camera is employed at both this and eye level, and further uses sideways upward shots, perhaps emphasising Travolta's belief in himself as being the best and above others. For the most part however, camera use is conventional compared to Berkeley's style, and because this is a narrative film, none of the performers look at the camera.

Figure 2. John Travolta in *Saturday Night Fever* (Badham 1977).

Notable among these dance-focussed films was *Hair* 1979, directed by Miloš Forman. *Hair* was slightly atypical of other dance films at the time, forming a step back to the more

musical formula of the pre-1970's films mentioned above, in keeping with the 1968 Broadway production on which it was based. As with *Fame* and *Saturday Night Fever* the film has a number of scenes that feature groups of dancers. Performer France Hunter was one of these dancers. In an interview I conducted with Hunter she recalls her awareness of the camera:

> In a way it's almost like you're being observed you know very closely, that was always my feeling, and I felt like there was more at stake because of the permanence of the record and I needed to be my best self in every moment (Hunter 2104).

Hunter's concerns, whilst far less acute than those expressed by Pirandello in 1916 or Benjamin in 1936, nonetheless demonstrate the impact of camera presence on her performance. Hunter goes on to note:

> Usually working with a choreographer you have a very clear idea of their perspective and concept and, certainly in proscenium, you can tell what the audience is seeing. But with film it's way more. On the one hand it's very exciting because the possibilities are endless (Hunter 2104).

Hunter, who worked with choreographer Twyla Tharp and director Forman for a year in the making of the film, considered the possibilities of the dance/camera relationship as exciting, even though there was 'never any real communication [from] behind the camera […] or even the director of the film, with the dancers' (Hunter 2104); she described the people on the other side of the lens as 'this massive crew of people' (Hunter 2104). The film crew numbered 99 people (IMDb), and whilst there were 51 dancers, most dance sections of the film have featured fewer than this. Hunter goes on to say:

> All of the communication went between the director and cinematographer and the choreographer. And the choreographer would relay the communication to us, you know, in a modified way I'm sure. So yeah, it was, there was a huge wall of separation (Hunter 2104).

In 1967, Sony introduced the first battery powered, relatively inexpensive, portable recording system using magnetic videotape technology (Misek 2015). By the 1980s Panasonic, Hitachi, JVC and RCA had all released video recording systems (Schoenherr 2005). Initially used for news-gathering, the technology enabled a quick turn around in

getting stories into television news broadcasts as there was no chemical process needed before footage could be screened (Schoenherr 2005). The re-usable nature of the tapes also made the technology less expensive than film stock. The dance community was among those who took advantage of this to document work, and to use it for its creative possibilities as a choreographic medium. An increasing number of screendance works, though not all shot on video, began to be made outside of the mainstream movie industry in the late 1960s. Artists associated with postmodern dance, either as filmmakers, choreographers, or dancers, or a combination of the three, were producing comparatively low budget films that were more in keeping with the avant-garde style of Deren's films than films produced in Hollywood.

Examples of these are *Westbeth* (Cunningham and Atlas 1975), *Locale* (Cunningham and Atlas 1975), *Dune Dance* (Carolyn Brown 1978), *16 Millimetre Earrings* (Meredith Monk 1979), and *Husk* (Eiko & Koma 1988). These films emerged out of the dance community itself rather than the film industry casting dancers into the films. They differ from the mainstream industry productions in that their content, like Deren's *A Study in Choreography for the Camera*, comprises primarily dance rather than having sections of dance in them as part of a surrounding narrative. These filmmakers and many others like them had direct links with the dance community: Charles Atlas was assistant stage manager for Cunningham's company before becoming filmmaker in residence, and Carolyn Brown was a dancer for his company; Monk was a performer and choreographer, and Eiko and Koma performed and filmed their own work.

Merce Cunningham and Charles Atlas were prominent at this time in renegotiating the relationship between the camera and the dancer. In *Locale* (1977) Cunningham and Atlas set out to: 'explore the possibilities of moving cameras and moving dancers in a film' (Merce Cunningham Trust), *Locale* was one of the first dance films made with a Steadicam, and 'the first work by the collaborators in which the camera moved with the dancers, emphasising the kinetic punch of the movement' (Porter 2009, p.37). It opens with a two minute fifty-five second shot during which the camera is constantly on the move travelling amongst the dancers as they perform in a large studio space. The camera travels from one area of the space to another, shifting attention from one group of dancers to another. The camera and dancers constantly change from being far apart to passing very close to one another, but each negotiates the space on equal terms with each other through the pathways they travel. At times the camera travels to the dancers, and at other times the

dancers travel to the camera, the movement of which was 'choreographed […] as precisely as those of the dancers' (Vaughan 2002, p.36).

Academic Bryony White, reflecting on the work of Cunningham and Atlas notes that they: 'Began investigating the relationship between dance and video, creating dances specifically tailored for film, where the use and presence of the camera become integral to the choreographic construction of the work' (White 2016, p.36). The screen viewing experience in *Locale* illustrates this and echoes an observation made by Walter Benjamin who noted that: 'Guided by the operator, the camera comments on the performance continuously' (Benjamin 2009, p.24). In this respect, *Locale* may be compared with some of Berkley's camera choreography. For example in *I Only Have Eyes for You* (Berkeley 1953) the camera moves amongst the dancers as co-performer defining pathways past, through, and above them. In addition both use long takes, allowing the viewer's extended engagement with a real time relationship between dancer and camera. A fundamental difference however is that the camera trajectory in *Locale* is one that could be experienced by another dancer, as it is all shot at eye level. Berkley's camera trajectory travels high in the air and swoops down and through the elaborate sets of the dance scene, creating a movement pathway that cannot be replicated by a person without the support of a mechanical apparatus. In addition the two minute fifty-five second opening take of *Locale* is considerably longer than any shot lengths in Berkeley's films. The long takes in *Locale* allow, for the viewer, a relationship with the dancer that is not compromised by the fragmentation of the body, both in time and space, that is the effect of shorter takes edited together. Concerns in this area are discussed in Chapter 6 of this thesis.

These long takes in *Locale* have similarities with Hilary Harris's 1966 twelve-minute black and white screendance *Nine Variations on a Dance Theme.* Unlike the artists mentioned above in the context of their connection to the dance community, Harris was a documentary filmmaker whose work did not normally have dance content. However, *Nine Variations on a Dance Theme* provides an effective example of camera mobility that, like *Locale*, interacts with a dancer to create screen choreography that can only exist through their combination of movement pathways. Also like *Locale* it is shot at heights that could be replicated by a person in the room, and in the early sections of the film is composed of very long-takes. I discuss Harris's film in more detail in Chapter 4.

Screendance productions vary between two poles: films like *Nine Variations* that have a single camera operator/director working with an individual dancer, and events involving large teams of people. Even if a camera operator or director has a sympathetic interchange with a dancer, in the situation where there is a large crew of technicians there exists a division between the dancers and crew through their individual specialities. Specific trainings, technical specialisms, experiences, on-set roles, general interests, systems of communications between operators and positions in the spaces of the production all contribute to the creation of mini-communities in this respect. This strict division of roles, with the camera lens at its centre, is a practical way of working; unrestrained communication between everyone across the divide would inevitably create problems in the complex management of a film shoot. On the smaller scale shoots associated with avant-garde films, these divisions can have lesser impact than is indicated by Hunter's experience, with individuals being more likely to develop a personal rapport simply because there are fewer people in the filming environment with whom to communicate. However, contemporary screendance maker Katrina McPherson notes her awareness of the divide, even on her comparatively small film shoots:

> Having been a dancer myself and having kind of come through watching and working on other people's dance films as a young person, I always felt very very worried about what I felt was quite a schism existing between the dancers over there doing their thing, and the crew over here doing their thing. Because you would have the dancers, in their little costumes, standing out there in the lights and then you would have the crew in their sort of work clothes and their black jackets looking over there and people would be shouting across this divide (McPherson 2014).

McPherson's sensitivity to the dancers on set derives from her having been a dancer herself. She implies that being able to form a personal relationship with dancers on set helps to create a 'softer' relationship than might be possible on a large scale film shoot:

> I always feel that when I'm filming I can, just by my presence, affect what they are doing, and we have a relationship. In many ways that also kind of softens the tension between feeling, the dancer feeling, exposed or in any way violated by the camera (McPherson 2014).

Screendance maker Margaret Williams echoes McPherson's statement when she discusses her own work. She to acknowledges the importance of the relationship across the divide:

> We have to be extremely careful [….] with everyone I work with on any film. I'm very respectful if they're performing in front of the camera. You want to share, you know, you don't want them to feel you are going to do this and you're going to do this […] It's very much a collaboration (Williams 2014).

The larger and more complex the film shoot, the more roles there are to be undertaken and the more people needed to fill them. In addition, the more complex the process behind getting the camera rolling becomes, and the less flexible a filming event will be. By contrast, as McPherson indicates, small-scale screendance production often take place within a community of artists with dance sensibilities, rather than the film industry drawing on the dance community from outside. McPherson and Williams' statements acknowledge the divide but indicate a sensitive approach towards bridging it.

Smaller scale and often low-budget film projects that have the more personal dancer/camera relationship as described by McPherson and Williams are increasingly common. In the 1990s, The Arts Council of England and the BBC commissioned the screendance series *Dance for Camera*, and Channel 4 commissioned works for the series *Tights Camera Action*. These series produced a number of short films that were made collaboratively between choreographers and television directors and represent a body of work that might be seen as a threshold for British contemporary screendance work. Short screendance works are now constantly emerging, and their presence is evidenced by a growing trend in related courses at universities, and by the large number of film festivals worldwide[6] that embrace screendance or are even dedicated to it. [8]

Much, then, has changed in the years between the production of *Annabelle's Serpentine Dance* and contemporary screendance production. Moving image making is now highly accessible through low cost digital cameras.[7] The intervening space between the dance filming event and screening is shrunk by the ability to instantly play back that which has been filmed. The performer is quickly able to become a part of their audience through sharing the viewing experience with them and potentially feeling less alienated from them, circumnavigating the traditional distance between the two, and cancelling out the lack of response from the screen that Kelly spoke of (Genne 2003, 75). Nonetheless, in spite of

the 'every-dayness' of the mobile phone and other lightweight cameras, the presence of the lens remains as hard to ignore for contemporary subjects as it did for Annabelle Moore in 1894. The dancer/camera relationship may now be different from when she danced for Edison's camera, but camera presence still signifies a future re-presentation. Indeed, the extend of what can be captured by the lens is far larger, far more quickly accessed, and far less controlled than that of early cinema. Screendance maker and academic Douglas Rosenberg proposes the following:

> When a camera is brought into an event already unfolding we know that the nature of that event is inexorably changed. When an event begins with a camera already present, the event that might have taken place outside the purview of the camera has no chance of occurring (Rosenberg 2006).

Karla Shacklock, choreographer and performer, echoes Pirandello and Benjamin in her reflections on having her performance work filmed.

> I feel like the camera isn't as sensitive as a live person so they can't receive. So, if it's emotional, I need to somehow make it more emotional for that to transmute [….] for that to get into the camera. And I don't feel like that with a live being, because it feels they are sort of an open vessel that will receive it very immediately (Shacklock 2013).

Cathy Nicoli, Associate Professor of Dance from Roger Williams University, has spoken about *To be Watched While Eating an Orange* (Christopher Lewis-Smith 2015) a screendance project in a Rhode Island warehouse in 2014 where she performed alongside one hundred and thirty seven oranges. Responding to the question *"Who did you feel you were performing for?"* she answered, "Hmmm…who was I performing for? The camera, the oranges and myself in that order of importance" (Nicoli 2015).

Nicoli's answer prioritises the camera and makes no mention of the final audience, while Shacklock talks about getting the emotional content of her work 'into' the camera. From these quotations, it appears that the camera was, and still is, the dominant partner in the dancer/camera relationship. In the lineage that connects the dancer to the final re-presentation of him or herself on screen, the camera is nearer the manipulation process that follows on from the filming event than is the performer. It stands between the dancer

and postproduction. If dancers do not have access to post-production, their role (as with Berkeley's dancers) ends after their performance for the camera.

The emergence in the 1980s of the avant-garde work of postmodern dancer/filmmakers such as Merce Cunningham, Yvonne Rainer, Eiko and Koma, and Meredith Monk demonstrated how the dance community began to embrace filmmaking during this period, and in the late 90s and on into the next decade dancer/filmmakers such as Wim Vandekeybus and Thierry de Mey made a number of feature length screendance works. Dancer/filmmakers directors are now common and their work bridges the divide between the filmmaker and dancemaker communities through a merging of the two. [9]

Writer and academic Sarah Kember has argued that the filmmaker is in a position of control over images, a privilege that is not normally afforded to those who appear in the camera viewfinder: 'The photographic gaze is discriminatory – it privileges the viewing subject over the viewed object' (Kember 1998, p.55). In conventional film production it is hard to see how Kember's observation could be any different now than in 1894. Although the dancer/camera relationship may be closer in production works where links to the dance community exist on both sides of the lens, and where production environments do not involve large teams on the filmmaker side of the lens, an inequality persists between the two. Early disquiet with camera presence may seem outmoded in a contemporary context but Pirandello's words must still resonate for the dancer: 'The little projector will play his shadow before the audience; and he himself must be content to act in front of the camera' (Benjamin 2009, p.242)

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CHAPTER 3. EXPLORING THE DIVIDE

Further considerations of the divide, as identified in chapter 3, and an overview and analysis of my own practice 1 and 2 (*Lab 1* and *Beyond*) as a means of exploring alternative dancer/camera relationships.

This chapter continues to discuss the divide that I identified in the last chapter as often existing between performer and camera. In the first part of the chapter, I continue to examine how a closer relationship – and less of a divide – between camera operator/director and dancer is evident in filming events that involve fewer people and in which closer connections to the dance community prevail on both sides of the lens. In the second part of the chapter, I describe an exploration of the camera/performer relationship made through two of my own screendance projects that were designed to challenge this divide.

In the first of these projects, I sought to inhabit both sides of the camera at the same time as a way of bridging the divide within my own consciousness. In the second project, I sought to remove the camera operator, myself, from the dancing/filming event as a way negating the divide. Both projects explored alternative production environments and aimed to subvert the conventional dominance of camera operator/director over the performing dancer in the dancing/filming event. The projects resulted in a series of short screendance works, the style of which resulted from their unconventional performer/camera relationship. The content of this chapter lays the foundations for Chapter 5, in which I explore the dancer/camera relationship as a *pas de deux*.

The camera always being in control… the camera person, the director, being the dominant partner in this role, and the choreographer / dancer always being the junior partner… from all the dance films that I've seen since we started talking, to me that seems to be irrefutable, [Don't make me look dogmatic and silly!] (Misek 2012)

Richard Misek's observation, in conversation with myself, reflects the work of Busby Berkeley as described in the previous chapter. It also holds good for many production environments in which the dancer performs in front of the camera, as described by France Hunter in the previous chapter. As Kember notes, the filmmaker is in a position of control over images not afforded to he/she/they who appear in the camera viewfinder: 'The

photographic gaze is discriminatory – it privileges the viewing subject over the viewed object and is intolerant of difference or otherness' (Kember. 1998. p55). In the conventional film production 'set-up', it is hard to see how Kember's observation could be otherwise. It is this status that I wished to challenge in the two experimental projects discussed in this chapter.

In the previous chapter, Hunter, McPherson, and Williams all acknowledge the divide that can exist on either side of the camera. As I have suggested, with smaller scale productions it is easier to bridge the divide between those in front of and those behind the camera through a more personal approach to filming that would be more difficult to foster on a large scale set. This observation is developed in this chapter, and has additional relevance in Chapters 6 and 7, particularly in relation to my own filmmaking practice. As indicated in the last chapter, small-scale screendance production often takes place within a community of artists with dance sensibilities, rather than the film industry. McPherson and Williams's statements acknowledge the divide but indicate a sensitive approach in their own practice towards bridging it. My own small-scale filmmaking experience echoes theirs: I always seek to develop a personal rapport with those that I film. Like McPherson, my background as a dancer is useful in that I already have a shared language and a community in common with the dancers I film. One of these is choreographer/performer Karla Shacklock. I asked her if the rapport she has with me during filming is different to that of other filmmakers. She answered:

> Yes, yes. Well, because I trust you and I feel safe with you, and I don't feel judged by you… that makes a difference, doesn't it? Because then you're more comfortable to be yourself if you're not thinking about those things (Shacklock 2013).

Shacklock's answer illustrates the findings of the last chapter, though I have nonetheless always been aware of my position behind the camera as one of being in control, reflecting Misek's observation. Although the dancer may feel free to dance in any manner, and in whatever space he or she wishes, it is I who frame them in the viewfinder, decide how much to zoom in or out, from what angle to film, and at what point to start and stop recording. I make the decisions about how the ultimate viewers of the dance will see them, both though the production process and editing in post-production. I am in control of the present and the future by the very nature of the filmmaking task. I capture the dancing body, manipulate and represent it to others. My position as camera operator privileges me in this

respect. Rosenberg regards the camera as 'a carnivorous image-prosthetic gathering device' (Rosenberg 2012, p.2). There is an implication here that the camera, as an extension of its operator, seeks out the dancing body in a certain manner against a certain agenda, a certain aesthetic, and a certain desire. Shacklock speaks of having awareness during filming of needing 'to give more, or heighten [her performance for the camera] because it's sort of gobbling it up. You sort of give it, and then it's taken' (Shacklock 2013). Rosenberg's and Shacklock's images of engorgement are reflected in Benjamin's sense of film viewers as 'consumers who constitute the market' (Benjamin 2009, p.244). For all the trust that Shacklock has in me as a filmmaker there remains the fact that I alone am in control of the lens, I open and close the portal through which the present passes into the future, and choose the manner of its passing.

In response to this operational status I undertook the two practical projects that challenged this balance of control. Through these projects I explored how I might subvert the conventions that support the divide between performer and camera operator/director that I have identified. The footage captured from these projects resulted in film work that had its own unique identity as a result of these alternative approaches (Appendix 8).

In *Practice 1*, I worked with improvising performers on a site-specific performance-making project. This was a project in which I set out, as a filmmaker, to inhabit what seemed a contradictory world, that of being between the state of control, outside of the action as a filmmaker, and being an improviser inside the action as a performer along with the other performers, being on both sides of the divide at the same time. In *Practice 2*, I set up a studio-based production environment designed to remove an element of the control that I have discussed. I wished to find out how subverting the conventions of screendance production, by giving a dancer greater authorship in regards to what is captured by the camera, would affect the dancer's relationship with the camera and subsequent imagery captured on camera.

Beyond (practice 1)

The name of this project drew on its location, a disused pub in the city of Bristol, UK, called *The Looking Glass*. The connotations of the term 'looking glass', echoing the lens of a camera, made it a useful term for my role in the project and I have drawn on this for the

naming of this thesis. The project, *Beyond*, was Arts Council of England funded and involved five performers working on improvisational tasks set by Dr Karla Shacklock over a period of twenty days (see examples in Appendix 5). Selections of the work generated were then performed in the building as a series of public performances.

My role in the production was to engage with improvisations and create screen based performance material. Rather than being on the outside of the performer's and the director's creative processes, capturing performance material as an outside eye, deliberating at each stage what might be effective for an end product, I chose to position myself as a collaborator with the improvising performers, giving myself the task of bridging the divide between camera operator and performer by being both at the same time.

Engaging with the immediacy of improvisation in this manner presented a challenge to me as a camera operator. The nature of capturing images through the lens necessitates a degree of control that is at odds with the consciousness aspired to in an improvisation. Dancer Nancy Stark Smith proposes the space offered by improvisation as: 'Where you are when you don't know where you are' (Stark Smith 1987, p.3). The camera however demands a level of operational control that is at odds with the state of 'not knowing where you are'. At a very basic level, the lens needs to be directed at that which is identified as the subject matter. A degree of planning and on-going engagement with the apparatus is unavoidable unless the filmmaker abandons all to chance beyond the act of setting the camera to record.

A further challenge in integrating myself, and my camera, into the physical improvisations was that the camera took up physical space. The location of the project consisted of relatively small rooms inside the disused pub. This in itself, when working with the performers, had an impact on the physical work that emerged from many of the improvisations: it restricted the performers movement, including that of my own, through the camera taking up space, and through the performers being mindful of the close proximity of a physical object that could cause injury and/or be damaged by colliding with it.

Figure 3. Sony Z1. The camera used on Shacklock's *Beyond* performance project.

Shacklock's daily tasks (Appendix 5) gave me the opportunity to experiment with different ways of integrating myself as a filmmaker with the other performers. A fundamental difference in my approaches to each individual task, as opposed to the other performers, concerned my choice of physical distance between myself with camera, and the performers. For some tasks I worked as if voyeuristically from a distance, removed from the action of the performers and making decisions concerning framing and camera operation. For others, I physically took part in the improvisation, in physical contact with the other performers, with the camera in one hand, its controls set to automatic, with little regard to the direction in which the lens faced. In the latter relationship, as much as I wished to straddle the divide between being filmmaker and performer, each role was compromised by the other. The requirements for engaging with each meant partly abandoning the other, and the only way I was able to engage with both at the same time was to compromise my attention to each. To engage fully with the physical improvisation would have meant disregarding the camera in my hand, risking letting it fall or hitting another performer. When working physically closely with the performers, responding to the improvisation task set by Shacklock, I found that the nearest I could get to splitting my consciousness was to alternate rapidly between 'camera operation consciousness' and 'improvisation consciousness'. I was not able at any time to completely indulge in the latter for fear of letting go of the camera or injuring another performer with it. I was however able to operate the camera within the physical spaces of

the improvised performances in a manner that I felt might reflect the visual and kinaesthetic experiences of improvising as I was myself in amongst the performers. By drawing on my own skills and experiences as a dancer, engaging in the improvisations with my own body, and using only the minimum attention needed to operate the camera, I often filmed whilst working in close proximity to the action and in physical contact with the other performers.

As a means of structuring my decisions as to how to engage with each of Shacklock's tasks in relation to the performers, I formulated a 'Chart of Immersion' (see Appendix 6). Immersion in this context related to the degree of my physical integration in the performance tasks. The chart has seven levels of 'immersion', each relating to the physical distance from, and degree of involvement with, the performers. For each task I set myself one of these levels to define my engagement with it. At one extreme, Level 1, the following conditions dictated my relationship with the performers:

> Level 1. Filming from a distance. Camera locked off (improvisers possibly unaware of being filmed). Camera operator has full control over design and construction of viewfinder images, plus adjustment for light, zoom, focus, frame rate, and sound capture.

At the other extreme, Level 7, the following conditions dictated my relationship with the performers:

> Level 7. Improvising freely with the performers. No control of camera other than turning it on and off at the start and end of the performance. Camera held in hands as extension of the body. Basic consideration of filming direction. Auto focus on.

Figure 4. Still from *Beyond*: *Beyond Support Journeys* (Lewis-Smith 2012). Working in close proximity with the performers. Approximately Level 6 of Chart of Immersion (Appendix 6).

The seven levels carried varying degrees of challenge and produced different sets of moving images. It was not difficult to engage with Levels 1 to 5 of the chart. But engagement became progressively more difficult from Level 6 onwards, when demands on splitting my consciousness between performer and improviser were increasingly difficult. Level 6 represented the limits of my ability to bridge the divide between myself as camera operator and myself as one of the performers.

Figure 5. Still from *Beyond*. Working at a distance from the performers. Approximately Level 3 in my Chart of Immersion (Appendix 6).

Figure 6. Still from *Beyond*. Working more closely. Approximately Level 5 in my Chart of Immersion (Appendix 6).

Figure 7. Still from *Beyond*: *Beyond Support Journeys* (Lewis-Smith 2012). Approximately Level 6 in my Chart of Immersion (Appendix 6). Hand is that of camera operator engaged in the improvisation.

Beyond Support Journeys (Lewis-Smith 2012) is the un-edited footage from Shacklock's task of the same name.[1] In this exercise, I physically became a part of the improvisation with other performers in an attempt to straddle the divide between the camera and the performer within my own consciousness. However, it was never possible for me to entirely inhabit the spaces on each side of the lens at the same time during the improvisation. Acknowledging the camera's 'needs', its requirements in order for it to record, could not be denied. In this sense, it became another performer, asserting its own need for space and attention. Brannigan notes how 'Difficulties arise [….] when the camera abandons its role as the mere recorder of movement and begins to assert its own personality' (Brannigan 2011, p.3). The camera in *Beyond Support Journeys* asserted its personality both through its individual perspective on the action in front of its lens, and in the sense if its physical presence occupying space amongst the performers. The camera and myself were both independent through our visual perspectives, but joined physically as I responded to the improvisation, switching between improvisation consciousness and camera operator consciousness.

Rosenberg's reflects on the camera as an: 'image-prosthetic gathering device that by necessity becomes an extension of the body' (Rosenberg 2012, p.2) [2]. In *Beyond Support Journeys* the camera felt like a physical extension of myself, and although it was less an extension of my senses, I was unable to only connect with it as just an item that I

automatically held in my grip. I was aware of its physical presence as a hard-edged item among performing human bodies, and as such was not able to remove myself from the responsibilities inherent in the situation, but I was also not able to detach myself from my link to it as a filmmaker and the desire to know where it was pointing. With the camera set to record, it felt as thought I was holding a living item with a desire, a desire transferred from me but one that I could not fully be detached from.

In this scenario, the personality of the camera, and myself with it, became additional performers through our physical interactions in the improvisation, but with our presence the potential to re-play the performance of the present to an unknown audience of the future existed. The camera, in its privileged position of choosing how the performers might be re-presented, could not be denied by me or the other performers as an element of the task set by Shacklock. Were I to have been able to completely integrate myself into the improvisations, holding the camera as if it were an inert item of no particular significance, danger, or value, then I might have been able to achieve Level 7 of the Chart of Immersion.

As a means of reducing the size, and thus the physical presence of the camera, and also the need to hold it, I extended *Practice 1* to another experiment where I used a GoPro camera mounted on a body harness. The camera remained an: 'image-prosthetic gathering device' (Rosenberg 2012, p.2), but was more discrete and allowed for fuller body movements by the wearer. The practice took place at The Edge Studio, Bath University UK, on 7th May 2015 and involved dancers Meg Fynn, Nadine Hope, and Jess Macaulay.

As in *Practice 1, The Edge Studio Improvisation* (Lewis-Smith 2015) aimed to close the divide between camera and performer, this time by dispensing with the need for the performer to hold the camera.

Figure 8. GoPro camera and harness as used in *Edge Studio Improvisation* (Lewis-Smith 2015).

The camera was worn by two of the dancers during two separate improvisations. Although there was no need for the camera to be physically held, both dancers noted how the camera physically affected their ability to move freely. Dancer Meg Fyn noted: 'I think naturally it affects your movement, you don't roll on the floor, or you don't act as freely as you would without it' (Fyn 2014). Dancer Nadine Hope similarly reflected: 'It's not like you could dive roll and like fall on the floor because you might damage it' (Hope 2014). In relation to the dancer's ability to inhabit both roles at the same time, in spite of operating at 'Chart of Immersion' Level 7, they encountered a distinct difficulty in doing so. Fyn noted how:

> Moments would happen when another dancer was right in front of me and then in my head I imagined that that was creating a nice image, so it reinforced that 'oh yeah, I am wearing a camera', and then for a few seconds after that I would then be really conscious of the facing of the camera and 'oh should I follow them, should I not? (Fyn 2015).

Hope's experience was similar to Fyn's. She described the roles as being:

So separate. It's either you are full on dancing and rolling about and just being that one thing, or you are trying to capture dance […] I would say it was very difficult to put yourself in both of those roles (Hope 2015).

Fyn and Hope's experiences resonate with my own in Shacklock's *Beyond* project, but their inability to inhabit the consciousness of performer and filmmaker at the same time was less to do with the physicality of the camera and more to do with the psychology of the different roles. Their responses suggest that the divide between the roles of camera operator and performer that exist between individuals persist within one's own consciousness, in dancing/filming events, even when the camera is small, attached to the body, and does not need to be manually operated.[3] *Lab 1,* which is the second practical project described in the is chapter, was designed as a reaction to these findings by endeavouring to create a production environment in which the camera operator, in this instance myself again, relinquished control of what was being captured through the camera lens by being physically absent from the proximity of the camera.

Lab 1 (practice 2)

The second practical project that I undertook reversed the intention of the first. Through the *Beyond* project I sought to take myself, as filmmaker, as close as possible to the subject of the film as a means of bridging the divide. In *Lab 1*, I sought to remove myself as much as possible from the filmmaking process, leaving decisions as to how the performance was captured on camera to the dancer herself through her being able to visually access her mediated performance as seen by the lens through which she was being filmed via live feed projection. In this scenario

In *Lab 1*, I disengaged myself from the role of camera operator, in which I would normally make on going decisions during the filming event. To do this I constructed a small-scale production environment (one dancer, one technician, one musician and me) in which the dancer could make her own decisions about over how she was 'captured' by the camera. I, as a camera operator/director stepped back, during filming, from the decision-making process that concerned what was captured through the lens of the camera. I did this as a means of removing my consciousness from the camera viewfinder side of the divide. This experiment offered an opportunity to override the conventional dancer/camera-operator relationship that the findings in the previous chapter, and at the start of this one, present.

It remains important to acknowledge, however, that I was still the controller of the overall filming event in that I devised and physically set up the production environment. As such, the cameras were perhaps not completely divorced from me as an 'extension of the body', in that I had placed them on the edge of the performance space, deciding where the cameras would be positioned and which areas they would focus on. However, in the actual recording event I remained at a distance from them.

Instead of a camera operator (myself) observing through a viewfinder, I arranged for the images from three cameras to be fed live to large screens that the dancer could watch whilst performing (see figures 9, 10 & 11). In this manner, the dancer, Sophie Taylor, was able to move in and out of, towards and away from, the cameras, and to choose the manner in which they would capture her whilst dancing. Importantly, Taylor improvised rather than danced set choreography, as set choreography would have given her limited choices as to how she interacted with the camera. During Taylor's performances I moved away from the cameras and watched from behind the screens. *Lab 1* consisted of four experiments*, each with a different camera set up. Experiments 1, 2, & 3 utilised three static cameras with no operator (other than setting up, turning on and off). Experiment 4 utilised a single moving camera with myself as a blindfolded operator.

Figure 9. *Lab 1*. Screens on three sides of the performance space, stage left.

Figure 10. *Lab 1*. Screens on three sides of the performance space, stage right.

As with *Practice 1*, the experiments in *Project 2* produced footage with a distinctive identity resulting from the production set up. Minimising my own influence on the filming event enabled the unexpected. Artist Robert Rauschenberg noted how restricting his own creative decision making process made way for interesting work: 'If I can just throw enough obstacles in the way of my own personal taste, then maybe it won't be all controlling, and maybe the picture will turn out to be more interesting as a result' (Rauschenberg 1965, p.232)

Through my bypassing of my own filming style and habits and allowing Taylor to move in and out of the field of vision of each camera lens of her own volition, footage emerged that would have been unlikely if I had been operating the camera, just as Rauschenberg suggests happened in his own work when an element of control was relinquished. Six short films were produced from Experiments 1, 2 & 3 (see Appendix 10), each drawing on qualities that emerged unexpectedly from the filming events. A full account of the practice is given in Appendix 8.

Lab 1 involved the almost opposite scenario from *Beyond*: it removed me physically from my camera. Taylor's experiences illustrate a shift in authorship from conventional production environments as described earlier in this Chapter 3 by Hunter, McPherson, and Williams. Taylor indicates an awareness of her dancing self, experienced on the screens:

> Having three screens and having me on each of the three screens, was like me working with myself. So it was like there was four of me in the room and by looking at each different screen and by looking at myself it looked like I was helping myself along the way.… I found myself, particularly in the camera that was magnified, doing the same sort of movement with my hands because I thought that looked good, and it looked, er, I know it sounds really stupid, but in my opinion it looked cool… And then I start moving, and then I think that, especially on the zoomed in one I'm thinking 'wow that's my face and it's really zoomed in. People are going to be looking at that (Taylor 2013).

Figure 11. *Lab 1*. Screens on three sides of the performance space from behind with Taylor performing.

Taylor indicated an awareness of what the cameras were capturing and she adjusted her performance as a result, taking control of her mediated self in the live performance. She said afterwards, reacting to seeing herself on the screens, how 'people are going to be looking at that' (Taylor 2013), indicating how she was aware during performing that she would be seen by a future audience.

In *Beyond* the camera was a moving entity within the performance space, taking up space and physically affecting the performer's movements. In *Experiments 1, 2 & 3* of *Lab 1* the cameras were outside the performance space, having no physical impact within the space alongside the performer. Their static presence outside of the performance space enabled Taylor to improvise freely and choose the manner in which each camera recorded her dancing without the presence of a moving camera operator in the space with her

In one sense however, the divide still existed in *Lab 1.* As I have already mentioned, acknowledgement that I was the controller of the overall filming event needs to be made: I devised and physically set up the production environment. Though the experiment allowed Taylor to author her movement in terms of how this was captured on camera, the only way

that I could have removed my influence would have been for Taylor to have instigated and set up the entire project herself, including the cuts made in the resulting videos (in this project, they were made by me).

In the last experiment of *Lab 1* (*Experiment 4*) I brought together the concept of the *Beyond* project, where I endeavoured to close the divide through performing with the other performers, with the concept of *Lab 1*, where the performer is able to authorize how she is seen through the camera lens, In *Experiment 4* I entered the performance space with a handheld camera (still wired to the live feed) and asked Taylor to direct me, and thus the camera, to produce whatever images she chose to appear on a single screen from the moving camera. For this exercise I was blindfolded so that I could not 'aim' the camera without Taylor's instructions. The exercise changed the relationship between us from that of the previous events in *Experiments 1, 2, & 3*. In these, Taylor controlled the way her image was captured through the lenses of the static cameras. Beyond being set to record, the cameras were inert and Taylor interacted with them by choosing when and how she was filmed. In *Experiment 4*, she interacted with a moving camera and with me as camera operator within the performance space, rendering me a co-performer as in *The Beyond* project. Taylor's reaction to this was very different from that of *Experiments 1, 2 & 3* in that she was no longer dancing with her mediated self, she was dancing primarily with me, and then with her mediated self as a secondary presence. Where footage from *Experiments 1, 2 & 3* clearly shows Taylor looking at the screens on which she was projected, in *Experiment 4*, published online as *Lab 1 Blindfold Camera* (Lewis-Smith 2012), she can be seen looking far more at the camera and me. Taylor's explanation suggests that she needed to focus on me to ensure that I remained safe, as I was not able to see (see Appendix 10).

> It was really nerve-racking. Because I have responsibility for you. And obviously I don't want anything to happen to you. […] once I got into it, it was fine. but it was just making sure I was still dancing as I'm asking you to do things. […] I find talking and dancing quite easy when I'm by myself, but then obviously I'm responsible for your body as well, that's another thing on top of that to think about. (Taylor 2012)

This blindfold experiment produced footage that was shaky and often tipped sideways but there were two aspects of it that are pertinent to the performer/camera divide. Taylor notes that she felt that she needed to take responsibility for me as camera operator, a position in

which she was directing me. The footage from the blindfold experiment shows her giving clear instructions to me in respect of where to point the camera, where to move with it, what height to film from, whether to zoom in or out, and how fast to move. Taylor had in effect crossed the divide and inhabited both sides of the lens by guiding the camera and performing for it at the same time. In *Beyond*, one of the reasons that I was unable to inhabit the roles of camera operator and performer at the same time was because I was holding the camera. In this instance Taylor was not restricted in this respect. However, she noted: 'I'm doing movement that is very similar all the way, and I think that slightly did happen because I've tried to split my concentration' (Taylor 2012).

The second aspect of the blindfold experiment that is pertinent to the performer/camera divide concerns the mobile hand-held camera, with myself as operator responding to the dancer in the designated performance space, becoming a second performer in the dance. Of all the interactions explored in *Beyond* and *Lab 1*, this simple experiment produced the greatest shift of equality between performer and camera/camera operator as Taylor and I responded to one another. Taylor responded to me in the space and to the live feed from my camera, and I responded to her instructions, tipping the balance of control in her favour.

Beyond and *Lab 1* build on the findings of Chapter 3 to reveal that a range of relationships can exist between the camera/camera operator, and the performing dancer. Findings from *Beyond* and *Lab 1* suggest that the divide between the dancer and camera operator is at its narrowest through the single dancer/camera relationship where both roles are performed as part of a duet and a sympathetic relationship exists between performers. This finding, as embodied in the blindfold exercise, leads into the forthcoming chapters of this thesis where the dancer/camera duet is discussed in detail, and ultimately to the making of my film *The Glasshouse* (2016). [4]

CHAPTER 4. CAMERA AS PERFORMER

> The camera and dancer *pas de deux*. An analysis of how the camera can reveal its presence as a partner in performance on screen.

In the chapters 2 and 3 I identified the divide that can exist between performer and camera operator, and the overall seniority in terms of authorship, of those on the viewfinder side of the camera over the performers in front of it. I explored, through practice, ways in which the balance of authorship associated with this relationship might be re-negotiated through alternative production strategies. This re-negotiation, in *Beyond* and particularly in the blindfold experiment in *Lab 1* (Chapter 3), narrowed the divide between myself, as camera operator, and the performers that I was filming. The practices revealed some of the difficulties of creating equal partnerships in the dancing/filming events I described. Through these projects I identified how the narrower the gap, the more the camera, and its operator, participate in the filming event as a co-performer, engaging with Deren's concept of the camera/performer relationship as a *pas de deux* (Deren 2005, p.251).

In this chapter I continue to explore the dancer/camera relationship with an emphasis on the camera as co-performer. I extend this exploration to include the manifestation of the camera's contribution to the performance, as a performer, in the final screen product.

In his 1936 essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, Walter Benjamin, refers to the camera as an intruder in the space between performer and audience, and notes that: 'Guided by the operator, the camera comments on the performance continuously' (Benjamin 2009, p.24). He goes on to suggest that camera movements form part of the overall movement construct of the film: '…It includes a certain number of movements that need to be recognised as those of the camera itself' (Benjamin 2009, p.24).

Benjamin's acknowledgement, in 1936, of the camera as a moving entity suggests the movement of the camera which would at that time been mostly panning from side to side, up and down, or travelling through space.[1] This movement is essentially part of the camera's contribution to the performance that it is capturing in that it creates screen movement. The camera movements also asserts its existence as a performer, as Vivian Sobchack suggests: 'The moving camera is not only a mechanical instrument, an object of visual and kinetic perception; it is also a subject that sees and moves and expresses perception' (Sobchack 2005, p.37).

Busby Berkeley's camera work provides a good example of the camera as: 'A subject that sees and moves and expresses perception' (ibid).[2] In Berkeley's films, choreography is created by performers, camera, set, and editing together. His camera often moves amongst the dancers as a co-performer defining pathways past, through, and above them. Berkeley even went so far, in *Easy to Love* (1953), as to arrange shots of dancers from a helicopter with the camera operator hanging beneath on a trapeze. In Berkeley's choreography for the song *I Only Have Eyes for You* in the film *Dames* (1934) the camera moves not only amongst the dancers but also past and through the set, parts of which are also moving. The screen effect is one in which everything moves in relation to everything else. The screen effect is similar to that of being in a train that is stopped at a station. If another stationary train fills the view from the window and then begins to move, it can feel as if it is your train that is moving. In Berkeley's choreography, the visual relationship between dancers and the camera has the same effect. For example, the transition between figures 30 and 31 below suggests that the camera is travelling left as it pulls back from the performers, making them appear to turn. By the time the camera has pulled back further (figure 32), it becomes apparent that the set and dancers are in fact rotating on a revolving stage and the camera is not travelling left, as first perceived. At this moment the perception of the camera/performer relationship undergoes an adjustment; by the point of figure 32. The viewer's proprioceptive relationship with the dancers, via the camera lens is shown to have been an illusion.

Figure 12. *I Only Have Eyes for You* (Berkeley 1934).
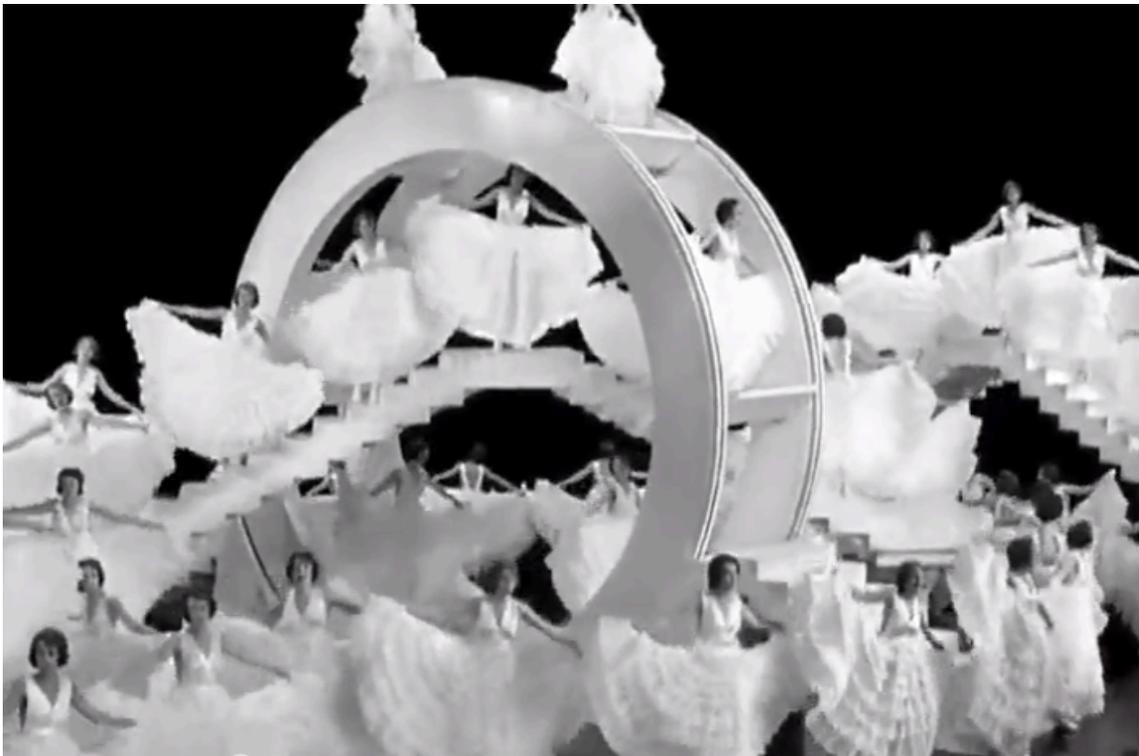
Figure 13. *I Only Have Eyes for You* (Berkeley 1934).
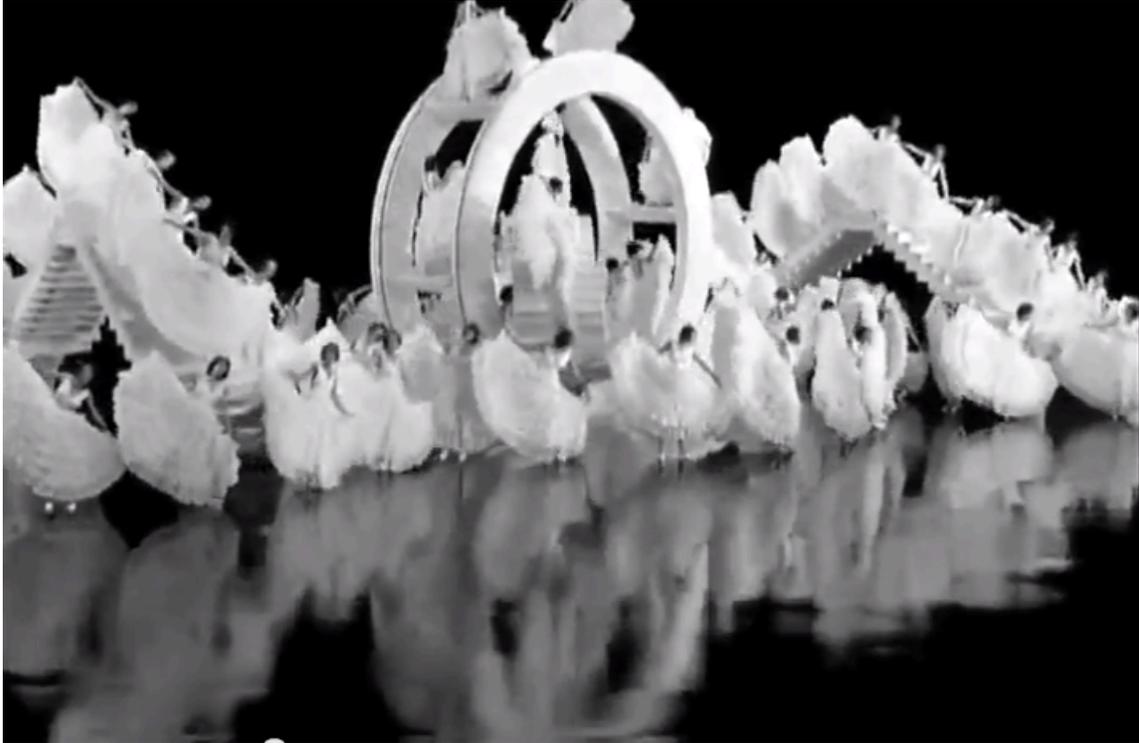
Figure 14. *I Only Have Eyes for You* (Berkeley 1934).

Somatic practitioner and academic Karin Rugman summarises kinaesthesia as: 'The sensory mechanism that enables us to perceive or sense motion, weight, and the position of the body in relation to the external environment' (Rugman 2015, p.199). Berkeley's camera movement in *I Only Have Eyes for You* supports a screen viewer kinaesthetic engagement in this manner through the way the camera moves in relation to the performers and set as in figures 30, 31 and 32. Other movement in the same dance sequence includes involves the camera travelling amongst the dancers, then pulling out and up above them, and then down to a viewing place behind the set. The effect, illustrated in figures 33 to 36, is to create three viewpoints in a single camera movement demonstrating Berkeley's continually shifting camera perspective. In figures 33 and 34, the camera travels through the dancers at their level, and through the set, which has at its centre a wheel that revolves both on its vertical and horizontal axis. It then travels beneath a stairway and then upwards, higher than eye level, diverging from the the dancers' perspective. It then descends, closely passing the stairs (figure 35), and arrives at a point where it looks voyeuristically at the dancers through a hole in the set (figure 36). The effect is a kaleidoscope of perspectives and movement on different planes, which creates an illusion, for the spectator, of self-motion. Even though, as Metz suggests, we are aware that

'…the film is bought into existence through machinery' (Dodds 2004, p.184). Boucher supports 'self-motion' as a viewing effect by maintaining: 'Moving images, especially screen projections, can make us feel as if they were our own movements that are not. The visual and vestibular systems can interact in such a way as to cause the visually induced illusion of self-motion' (Boucher 2014, p.66).

Figure 15. *I Only Have Eyes for You* (Berkeley 1934).

Figure 16. *I Only Have Eyes for You* (Berkeley 1934).

Figure 17. *I Only Have Eyes for You* (Berkeley 1934).

Figure 18. *I Only Have Eyes for You* (Berkeley 1934).

So, although the camera may be unseen in Berkeley's film, it is not un-sensed. Its movement evidences its presence and constructs the viewer's experience as an element of the screen choreography, a partner, deliberately or otherwise, in the dance. Whyte notes that: '[c]horeographic practice takes place on either side of the lens' (Whyte 2010, p.1). This statement applies the choreography that happens in front of the camera, and how the camera operator choses to frame the choreography, and he or she choses to tilt, pan etc, or physically move the camera through the space. Berkeley's cinematography is often a good example of this as the camera moves in relation to the dancers, creating screen choreography that can only exist as a combination of the movement of both.

Berkeley said of his dances: '"We once figured out they cost about $10,000 per minute on the screen, and people yelled about that, but I hollered 'em down"' (Turan 2008). Berkeley's equipment was not readily available to more avant-garde filmmakers of the time like Maya Deren. Over recent years, this has changed: high quality cameras and small-scale film production accessories that enable cameras to travel smoothly are now available at a comparatively low cost.[3] Many contemporary screendance works employ such mechanisms and the mobile camera, both mechanically supported and hand-held, is a common aspect of screen choreography. Of particular relevance in this discussion concerning the mobile camera as performance partner is the short screendance work

Motion Control (2002) directed by David Alexander Anderson, and I shall draw upon this work later in this chapter to further explore the camera/dancer relationship as manifested on screen.

Rosenberg's observation, noted in Chapter 2, that with the introduction of a camera into a dancing event: 'The event that might have taken place outside the purview of the camera has no chance of occurring' (Rosenberg 2006, p.14) is supported by my own observations in work carried out for the preceding chapters. In the carefully constructed choreography of Berkeley's films however, though the dancers may have been psychologically affected by camera presence, the performances would have to look the same for each filming take as they did in rehearsals. Dancers and camera were carefully choreographed in a single movement event, interacting with each other repeatedly to realise Berkeley's creation.

Andrew Klevan, analysing a one-minute, single take, section of *The Band Wagon* (1953) invests the camera with attributes akin to a performer in its relationship to a duet between Fred Astaire and Cyd Charisse:

> Before they dance with each other properly, there is a period of suspension where they appear to be in a slow, hesitant, exploratory dance with the camera. Couple and camera tentatively move towards and away from each other, trying to stay in touch. As they turn the corner their steps drop out of time, and the camera drops down too. There appears to be no special place to consummate their partnership as a crowd of dancing couples halts them and they sidle around the periphery; the camera, reflecting their situation, backs off, a retreat that enables the dancing couples to fill the frame, and further emphasis their exclusion. They drift lackadaisically among the crown and seem gently drawn towards the patiently waiting camera. 'Has the camera guided them courteously towards a better place? They continue to walk, and it is still pulling back, serenely, but a touch quicker than they, so a space emerges in front of them. Perhaps this clearing for their dance, quiet and empty, was fatefully waiting, but it appears to grow at this moment, for this moment, out of an empathetic relationship, an unspoken understanding, between the camera and the performers (Klevan 2010, p.11).

In Fred Astaire, director Vincente Minnelli worked with a dancer who was experienced in the field of filmmaking and the choreography of the camera is not spontaneous but carefully made to support the director's vision and Astaire's choreography. It is noteworthy that Astaire was particularly fussy about how his choreography was represented on film. He was not content to leave the cinematic decisions to the director, but insisted that his dances were captured in a manner that he consented to. [4] Klevan's analysis recognizes the camera as a partner in the dance and it's trajectory as an element of the choreography both in the original dancing/filming event and the resultant screen viewing experience. The camera, the hidden performer here, has all the steps carefully mapped out in advance and is integral to the duet, or the trio if the camera is to be included as a performer also. Both Berkeley's and Astaire's choreography in this instance is premade, as is the choreography of the camera that films it. [5]

Fixed choreography arguably supports a greater resistance to the influence, on the dancer, of camera presence, than does improvised dance. The very nature of a dancer being able to repeat movement that is pre-learned, with or without a camera being present, means that the dancer can 'do it again' in front of the camera and, in spite of what they might be feeling, the dance looks the same. Unless the camera actually gets in their way there is no reason to divert from the learned movement. When the cameras are rolling, the experience for the improvising dancer however, as discussed in Chapter 2, is much more likely to be reflected in the choreography.

In my experience of filming dance improvisation, particularly with a mobile camera, an on-going creative decision making process happens on both sides of the lens. The dancer responds to his or her reasons for moving, which could include the presence of the camera. The camera operator responds to the movement of the dancer, perhaps predicting trajectory, making second by second decisions about viewfinder image, responding to the dance on a moment by moment basis and thus becoming a partner in the improvisation. Maya Deren famously observed that for filmmakers: 'The most important part of your equipment is yourself: your mobile body, your imaginative mind, and your freedom to use both' (Deren 2005, p.18). In my films *Watergate Bay* (Lewis-Smith 2008*)* and *Bodmin Whale* (Lewis-Smith 2009*)* there is no set choreography; this applies to both the movement of the dancers and where in the location they chose to dance. As such, it was necessary for me to be re-active and improvise with the camera, responding to the dancing event as it unfolded in front of me. With this way of working, opportunities can present themselves, or

be missed. Katrina McPherson reflecting on the shooting of her film *The Time it Takes* (2013) in the landscape of South Uist, in the West of Scotland, recalled how:

> Every day we got in a minivan and drove to a different spot, I think it was about four or five different locations that we had thought 'that's where we are going to film', and we would just get out and we would start moving and filming. So literally I sometimes found myself, particularly in the first few days, with the dancers about half a mile down the road across the Machair and me thinking 'there's nothing for me to shoot' (McPherson 2014).

McPherson's experience is perhaps extreme, as there was so much space by which dancers and camera could be separated, but it does illustrate the range of possibilities that might occur in the filming of improvisation. The joint improvisations of dancer and camera are, I propose, essentially a *pas de deux* - a screen choreography that can only exist as an amalgamation of two movement pathways, just as it does with Berkeley's 'fixed' choreography. An example of this in an improvisational context can be seen in my work *Dancer/Camera Duet 1* (2012). Figure 37 shows a duet between performer Karla Shacklock, and me as camera operator, in the filming of filming Shacklock's work *31 Years* (Lewis-Smith 2011). My role in this piece was that of a co-performer, reacting to Shacklock's movement, which I had not seen prior to filming it.

Figure 19. Still from *Dancer/Camera Duet 1* (Lewis-Smith 2011).

Figure 20, Still from *31 Years* (Lewis-Smith 2011). Corresponding to camera view in figure 19.

Hilary Harris's twelve-minute black and white screendance *Nine Variations on a Dance Theme* (1966), as discussed in Chapter 2, also provides an effective example of a filmmaker's mobility interacting with a dancer to create screen choreography that can only exist through the combination of their movement pathways. Set in in a large sunny room, dancer Bettie de Jong performs a smooth continuous phrase in which she spirals up from the floor, through kneeling to standing, executes a series of extensions before returning to the start position. Harris's film shows the sequence nine times, each time using a different filming technique with the camera continually moving. Screendance maker Amy Greenfield describes the second variation:

> Harris again circles the camera, closer and at a lower angle, in a way that makes it impossible to tell which is turning, the camera, or de Jong. The result is that we experience the sensation of turning. At times it seems that de Jong and the room circle with and against each other (Greenfield 2003, p.24).

Each of Harris's variations creates a different screen perspective on de Jong's dance through filming at different distances from the dancer. Though de Jong's choreography is repeated for each section, the different camera perspective in each creates new screen choreography. In the eighth variation, Harris's camera travels through a series of intimate

close-ups, filmed so close that it becomes impossible to tell what is horizontal or vertical as there are few visual references to the recognisable horizontal and vertical architecture of the room (figure 39). To achieve this, camera and dancer, both moving, would have been very close to each other, in an intimate pas de deux. This viewing experience again illustrates Boucher's comment that: 'Moving images, especially screen projections, can make us feel as if they were our own movements that are not' (Boucher 2014, p.66).

Figure 21. Still from *Nine Variations on a Dance Theme* (Harris 1966), showing how dancer de Jong, lying on the floor, appears to be on the ceiling.

Like *Nine Variations on a Dance Theme*, the films *Six* (Lewis-Smith 2015), *Sense8* (McPherson 1999), and *Bodmin Whale* (Lewis-Smith 2009) all exhibit a close dancer/camera relationship that generate new choreography through their combined movements. These films also reference the mechanism through which they are made. In *Motion Control* (2002), devised and choreographed by Liz Aggiss and Billy Cowie, and directed by David Alexander Anderson, the camera/dancer relationship is central to the

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work, revealed on screen through an intimate choreographic relationship. The film utilises a highly mobile camera and at points, like in *Nine Variations on a Dance Theme*, challenges the viewer's perception of what is vertical and horizontal. In its second section, *Motion Control* presents the dancer camera relationship as a *pas de deux*, which I shall now discuss.

Laura Mulvey's observation (1975, p.15) of the cinematic convention that fictional drama cannot achieve reality, obviousness, and truth without hiding the mechanisms of production, is here subverted to create a fictional drama by turning the mechanism into a player in the narrative. In an introduction to the DVD version of the film Cowie explains: 'The essence of the film is the idea that the camera is an actual being of some kind and has a physical presence [and that the aim was to] choreograph the camera so it was almost like another performer' (Cowie 2002). Aggiss also clarifies the idea of the camera as performer: 'Ostensibly a solo, this is in fact a duet between camera and dancer. In Motion Control the camera is a performer, with needs, agility, and a personality all of its own' (Aggiss 2002). At the conclusion of the film an outtake explicitly reveals this relationship via a second camera filming dancer and motion control camera interacting (figure 26).

Motion Control is an eight-minute screendance of five sections. The first section, twenty-six seconds long, is filmed with a moving camera that travels quickly, often at ground level, into a house, up a flight of stairs, ultimately arriving at the doorway of a room. En-route, the camera encounters a cat that flees in apparent alarm. Supported by Foley sounds that suggest scrabbling, small rapid steps, and the squeal of the cat as it runs away, the camera point of view is suggested as an intruder, perhaps a creature of some kind due to it being close to the ground. This section presents the viewer with camera identity as a presence, a consciousness, en-route to a destination. The door opens revealing a bedroom, the second section of the film, with performer Liz Aggiss asleep on the bed. The camera enters and then makes a rapid move upwards to view the bed from above. There is a clear sense of intrusion into a private room, but the rapid rise to a bird's eye view (figure 22) defies the idea of the low moving creature suggested by the opening section. The camera rotates slightly from one side to another, suggestive of a how a person might tilt their head slightly from side to side in the act of a visual appraisal, before moving rapidly downwards to Aggiss' face who then wakes (figure 23). The remaining ninety-seven seconds of this section of the film shows interplay between camera and performer that suggests a standoff between two characters. Where the camera intrudes into Aggiss' private space, Aggiss

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challenges it with a series of defiant moves (figure 24). The establishment of human like head-tipping camera movement combined with other movements to fast or high to be human, leaves the identity of the intruder unclear. Other clues however serve to fill the gaps. At one minute thirty-eight seconds the film briefly polarises into a negative image (figure 25), and at two minutes and nine seconds the screen becomes clouded, as if looking through scratched glass, and Aggiss, looking directly at the lens, rubs and picks her teeth as if looking at her reflection. Both of these effects, as will be discussed with reference to McPherson's *Sense8* in the following chapter, reference filmmaking. Additionally, the sounds that accompany the action, which are hyper-foleyed, reference postproduction and defy the cinematic convention suggested by Mulvey as a means of achieving reality, obviousness, and truth (Mulvey 1975, p.15).

Figure 22. Still from *Motion Control* (Anderson 2002), section 2.
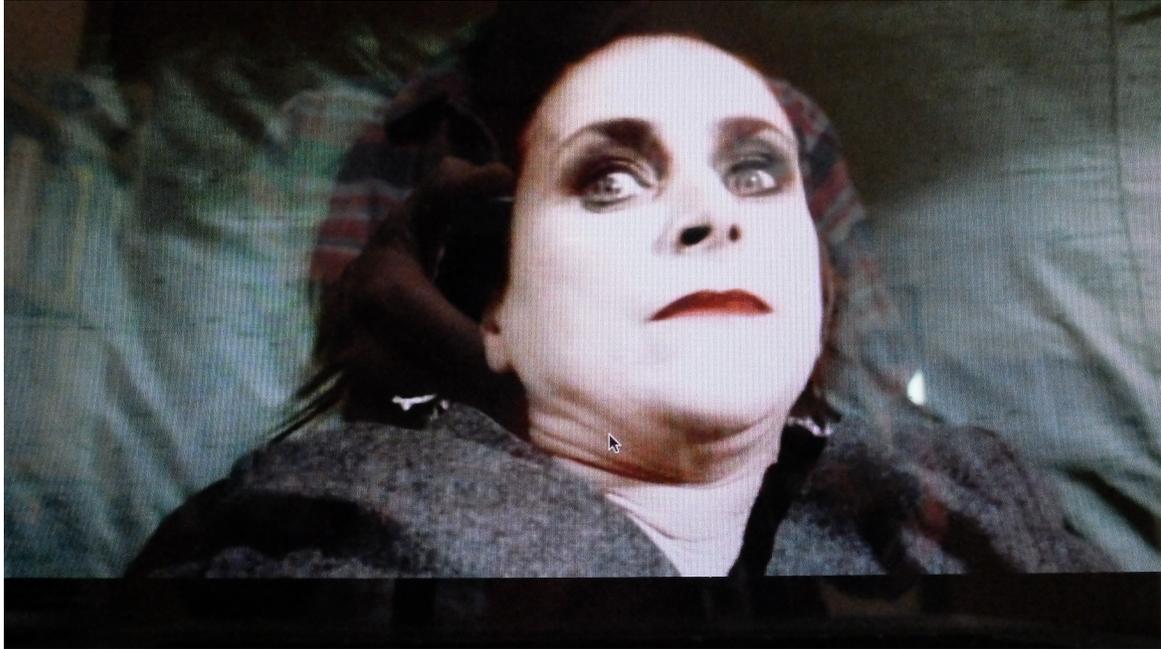
Figure 23. Still from *Motion Control* (Anderson 2002), section 2.

Figure 24. Still from *Motion Control* (Anderson 2002), section 2.

Figure 25. Still from *Motion Control* (Anderson 2002), section 2.

Figure 26. Still from *Motion Control* (Anderson 2002). Between the end credits of the film.

Although over eighty years separates Berkeley's *I Only Have Eyes for You* and *Motion Control*, they have a clear commonality. They both use mechanically controlled cameras that are able to create human and non-human point of views. Both employ cameras as

performers and makers of choreography, and both have dancers that make eye contact with the lens. Where Berkeley's films hide the mechanisms by which they are made however, *Motion Control* does not. *Motion Control* also echoes some of the qualities in Harris' *Nine Variations on a Dance Theme.* In section three of the film, Aggiss is confined to an open-fronted white box that appears to remain, for the most part, static in front of a static camera. On careful inspection, however, both box and camera can be identified as rotating together, recognisable by the fall of Aggiss' hair and clothes. The combination of the rotations makes it, as with Harris' film, difficult to know quite what is turning, confusing the viewer's sense of horizontality and verticality (figures 45 and 46).
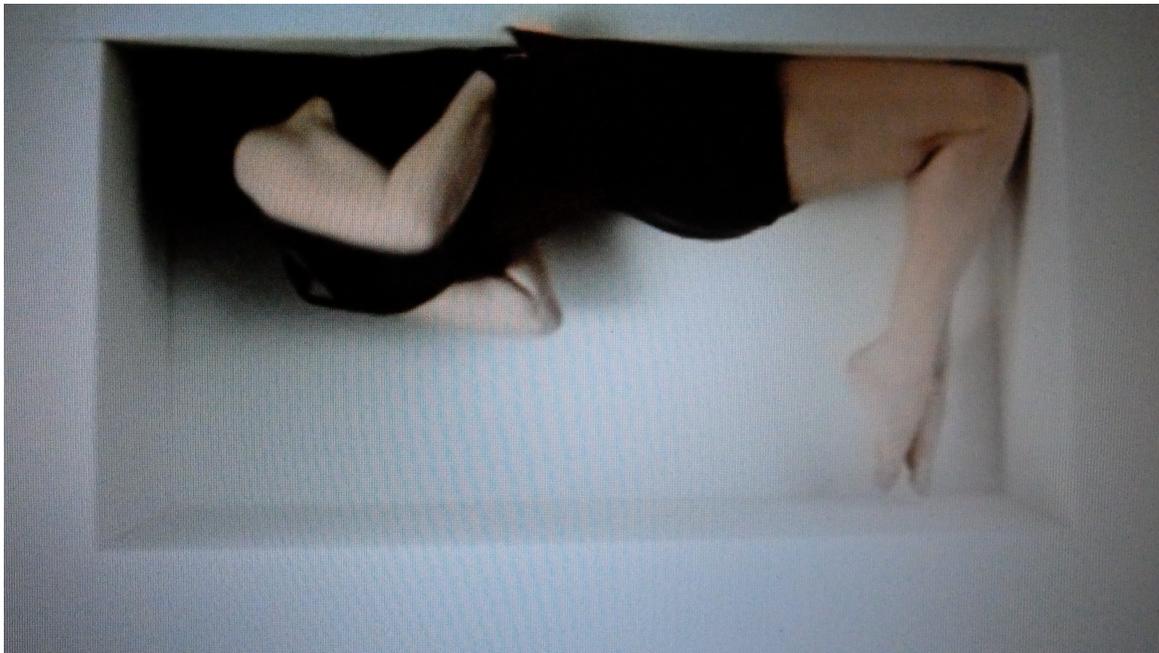
Figure 27. Still from *Motion Control* (Anderson 2002).

Figure 28. Still from *Motion Control* (Anderson 2002).

Though *Motion Control* shares many of the characteristics of other screendance works, it is distinct from the examples I have previously discussed in that it is a duet between a dancer and a computer operated machine, rather than a dancer and a camera/human camera operator. A camera operator *does* exist in *Motion Control*, but he or she one who programmes a computer in advance of the dance rather than one who physically co-performs with the dancer. Aggiss choreographs the work, then the computer is programmed in response to her movements; then, later, during filming, her movements respond to the pre-programmed camera.

The other films so far examined in this context suggest the same dancer/camera *pas de deux* and resultant screen choreography, but the relationship in them is more ambiguous in terms of the camera's actual identity. The absence of indicators in this context leaves the viewer to fall back on the only reference remaining, that of themselves and their own identity as a 'looker'. Metz proposes that the perspective of the cinema spectator is one in which*:* 'it is always the other who is on the screen; as for me, I am there to look at him. I take no part in the perceived' (Metz 2006, p.154). Laura Mulvey identifies three 'looks' associated with watching film:

> That of the camera as it records the pro-filmic event, that of the audience as it watches the film product, and that of the characters at each other within the screen

illusion. The conventions of narrative film deny the first two and subordinate them to the third, the conscious aim being always to eliminate intrusive camera presence and prevent a distancing awareness in the audience. Without these two absences (the material existence of the recording process, the critical reading of the spectator), fictional drama cannot achieve reality, obviousness, and truth (Mulvey 1975, p.15).

In relation to Mulvey's first look, '…that of the camera as it records the pro-filmic event' (Mulvey 1975, p.15), the viewer of *Motion Control* does not escape the kinaesthetic impact of the moving camera that can: '… make us feel as if they were our own movements that are not.*'* (Boucher 2014, p.64)*.* With respect to Mulvey's second look, '…that of the audience as it watches the film' (Mulvey 1975, p.15), Metz proposes that awareness of camera presence is in some way inevitable, the only rational possibility behind the spectacle: '…it is true that as he identifies with himself as look, the spectator can do no other than identify with the camera, too, which has looked before him at what he is now looking at' (Metz 1977, p.49). The implication for screendance is that the more the camera engages with the dance as a moving partner, the more the viewer 'senses' the camera and experiences the dance as a kinaesthetic experience.

However, even in the often-unconventional approaches to screendance-making that I have identified in previous examples, explicit revelation of the camera's presence is unusual. In *Nine Variations on a Dance Theme* De Jong appears detached from the voyeuristic camera presence; she makes no eye contact with it, even though we sense the camera through its movement. In *Six*, one performer, Leanne Oddy, makes eye contact at the end of the film, suggesting that either all of the dancers were unaware of the camera except her, or all the dancers chose to ignore it except her. Whichever way, the identity of the camera as performance partner is still obscure. Oddy's glance at the camera in the closing seconds of the film implies, retrospectively, that she may have been aware of it all along, but gives little away concerning her relationship with it. I will discuss this further in Chapter 7.

In *Bodmin Whale* (2009) the camera and my own presence as operator are, perhaps unusually, clearly shown in the film. Footage from a second camera that reveals me filming the dancer (figure 28) is used in the edit, and my own camera reveals this second camera in operation. Thus a triangulation occurs in which all elements of the dancing/filming event are evident in the film. Additionally, at the very end of the event I placed my camera on a

rock, still recording, filming dancer, second camera operator, and myself, meeting on the film location (figure. 47).

Figure 29. Still from *Bodmin Whale* (Lewis-Smith 2009), showing dancer and camera operators.

The identity of the camera as a co-performer is created by the degree of information revealed about it, either through reactions from the performers in front of the lens, or by the way it moves in relation to what is in front of it (as in *Motion Control*), or by directly showing it (as in *Bodmin Whale*). Where the camera moves within human like parameters, absence of information gives rise to multiple possibilities for camera identity, an identity that is ultimately constructed by the viewer. Informed by his or her own consciousness, the viewer is connected, via the screen and across time, to the camera. The fewer the clues, the more the viewer must imagine, consciously or unconsciously. As Metz proposes: 'A great eye and ear without which the perceived would have no one to perceive it, the instance, in other words, which constitutes the cinema signifier. It is I who make the film' (Metz 1977, p.49).

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CHAPTER 5. THE SCREEN VIEWER'S RELATIONSHIP WITH DANCER AND CAMERA AS PERFORMERS

Examining the screen viewer's experience as an extension of the dancer/camera relationship, and how the dancing/filming event itself can be revealed as part of this experience. The chapter examines this through analysing my own work alongside that of other filmmakers.

Where the last chapter explored the *pas de deux* relationship between performer and camera, and discussed the camera as performer as manifested through the film, this chapter focuses specifically on the viewer's experience of this relationship. It initially explores further how camera presence can be perceived, in the experience of viewing film, through movements associated with hand-held or steadicam filming, a moving image quality that I suggest supports the spectator's awareness of the dancing/filming event that gave rise to the film that they are watching. The chapter continues by demonstrating how a significant number of contemporary screendance works deliberately reveal the filming event by including on screen evidence of the mechanisms by which they were made.

In out embodied experience of 'reality', our sense of what is vertical is related to the plumb line of our individual centre of gravity. If a vertical pillar in a building, for example, were to lean even slightly to one side it would be immediately recognised as such, even when there are no other 'not leaning' pillars or benchmarks to compare it to. When our heads tip sideways however, everything in our field of vision tips against our individual centre of gravity. In this instance our vestibular system, which provides information related to movement and head position, adjusts our visual input to negate our perception of what we see tipping from side to side. Canadian writer and performer Marc Boucher, who has a specialist research interest in proprioception and sensory immersion, explains:

When information from the visual and equilibrium systems concur, as they usually do, the optic flow impressed on the retina agrees with input from the vestibular system. The latter acts as the body's plumb line and gyroscope, registering changes in position in relation to the gravitational field as well as in acceleration. When we walk down the street, we do not perceive lampposts and buildings as whirling around, but ourselves as moving about them (Boucher 2014, p.65).

If, however, we experience viewing within a given frame of verticality and horizontality, and the view presented within this frame tips, a conflict occurs. An example of this might be when flying. You are in a window seat on the left side of the aircraft and the plane is approaching the airport at which it will land. The pilot banks the plane to the left, aligning with the approach pathway to the runway. As you look from the window the landscape below appears to tip sideways, defying the vertical created by the window frame, which is supported by your own centre of gravity. The centrifugal force of the banking aircraft fools you into thinking that you remain vertical and the world outside the window has tipped sideways.

Though logic tells us that the ground remains horizontal and the aircraft is tipping, our perception, on a basic sensory level, tells us otherwise. Similarly, when we are watching film, the vestibular system connects us to movement on the screen. Film theorist Luis Rocha Antunes posits that we are unable to detach ourselves, in the viewing of film, from senses that commonly act to maintain essential sensory systems:

> Though it is true that we can, to some extent, use our cognition to unwire the experience of a film (by using belief/disbelief mechanisms, for instance), and switch to a mere intellectual (high order) experience, there are, however, limits to how much control we can exert over the low level sensory experience offered by a film. Those limits derive mostly from hardwired biological mechanisms that we cannot modulate such as breathing, blood circulation, and other gut mechanisms (Antunes 2012, p.526).

When watching screen media, the reference points of verticality and horizontality are the sides of the screen, which match the viewer's horizontal and vertical perception of the environment in which they are doing the watching. Should the film image 'tip' sideways, even a little, as a result of the camera having tipped, it defies our normal looking experience and challenges our sense of orientation through our vestibular system. A disconnection occurs between that which is sensed off and on the screen. This disconnection can be rationalised by understanding the screen orientation as the viewpoint of another – that of a the camera, or a character represented by the camera. An example of the latter might be news footage of an event at which a camera operator is running, perhaps in dangerous situation, with the camera still recording. The recorded image shifts wildly within the screen frame revealing camera presence.

Though in such an instance it would be obvious that the camera is moving rapidly from side to side because of the context, film theorist Christian Metz suggests that camera presence is part of the spectator's consciousness anyway:

> The spectator is aware that cinema involves a process of perception as the film is bought into existence through machinery. For instance, if the image tilts, the spectator is aware that the camera has rotated, as she or he has not moved her or his head (Metz 1975, p.39).

The sensation of 'tilting', known in the film industry as 'Dutching', [1] is particularly apparent in film locations that have clearly defined verticality and horizontality, for example, an architectural environment or one in which water is present. Examples of this can be found in the television series *Breaking Bad* (Vince Gilligan 2008-2013). Much of the filming for the series was done with a handheld camera or a steadicam. For the most part the handheld camera footage does not tilt noticeably. On occasions however there are a small sideways tilts, made noticeable by the steadiness of the camerawork at other times. For example in figure 14, the surface of water, a given 'levelness', is in conflict with the verticality and horizontality of the screen edges. This moment exemplifies Metz's observation that 'the spectator is aware that the camera has rotated' (Metz 1975, p.39) momentarily foregrounding the mechanism of the filmmaking.
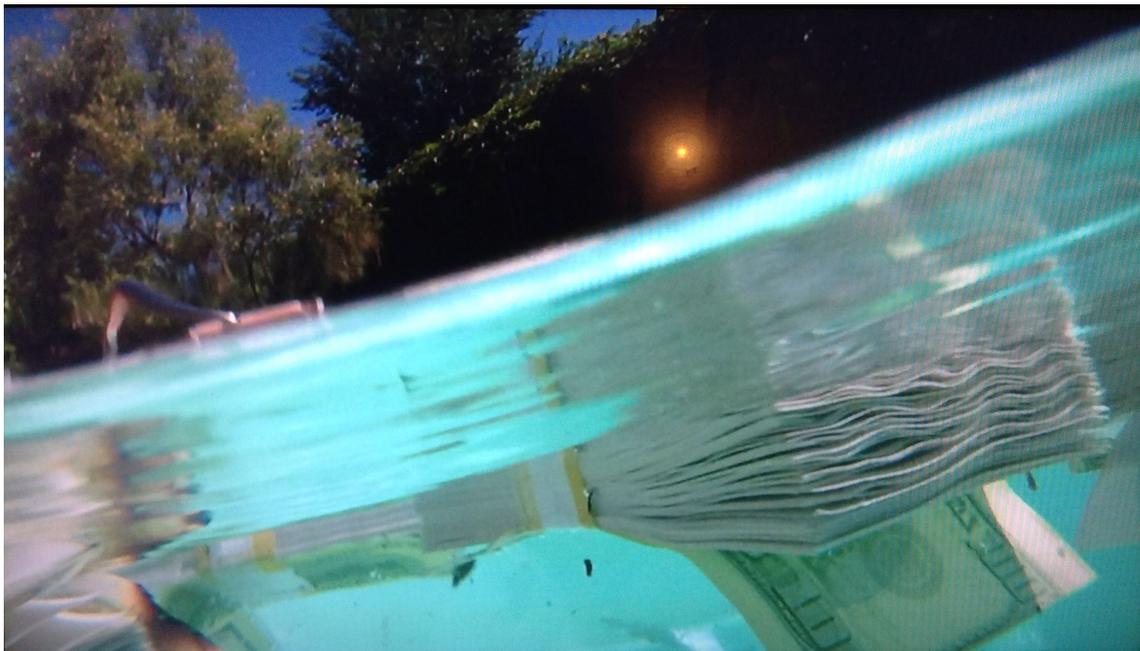
Figure 30. Still from *Breaking Bad* (Gilligan). Series 3. Episode 1. *'No Mas'*.

In figure 14, the camera, and thus in a sense the viewer, is situated partly below the surface of the water. The point of view in this instance is not of one of the performers – as no one is apparently in the pool. The point of view perhaps suggests something half submerged in the water, like the money, or simply just the presence of the camera. Metz notes that the uncommon angle: 'makes us more aware of what we had merely forgotten to some extent in its absence: an identification with the camera as the author's viewpoint. The ordinary framings are finally felt to be non-framings' (Metz 1975, p.39).

To minimise 'intrusive camera presence' would require no hand-held camera or steadicam. The cinematic suspension of belief associated with the Hollywood rules that smooth over shots that break continuity and/or narrative engagement (Monaco 2009, p.241) and conform to Mulvey's 'three looks' (Chapter 4, p.76) conflicts with Metz's suggestion of camera awareness. In addition, hand-held or steadicam work is now common in contemporary cinema and television, referencing the recording process and eroding the conventions of the unobtrusive camera.

Mulvey's observation (Mulvey 1975, p.15), however, provides a useful starting point from which to examine screendance in comparison to conventional narrative cinema, at which Mulvey's statement is directed. Screendance conventions, as identified in Chapter 2, fundamentally differ from those of traditional narrative cinema. Generally speaking, on-screen movement in traditional narrative cinema aims to imitate real-life pedestrian movement through the conventional grammar of cinematic narrative. Dance however, as an abstraction of real-life movement, is not normal as everyday pedestrian movement. Unless a screendance work is the choreographic arrangement of pedestrian movement, as in Siobhan Davies and David Hinton's film *All This Can Happen* (Davies and Hinton 2012), or the movement appears natural as in Geoffrey Jones's *Rail* (Jones 1966), it cannot be seen as representative of real-life movement, unless the dancing presented as in Hollywood films of the 1970s and 1980s, as already discussed (Chapter 2, p.32), where dancing is part of the 'real-life' plot.

Though many screendance works do adhere to Mulvey's 'three looks', a significant number subvert this by means of direct looks by performers at the camera lens that acknowledge its presence. acknowledging its presence. This chapter demonstrates this by drawing on a sample of 120 contemporary screendance works that represent a variety of styles and directors (see Appendix 11) to demonstrate this. In each of these films I looked for

examples of eye contact with the lens, eye contact that did not represent a cinematic device to allude to the subject looking at someone or something else. Forty-three of the films included, at some stage, performer eye contact with the camera lens. These contemporary works are similar in this respect to Berkeley's films (figure 1) where an acknowledgement of the camera, and thus the audience, makes no pretence of eliminating Mulvey's '…intrusive camera presence and [preventing] a distancing awareness in the audience' (Mulvey 1975, p.15). Figures 15 to 22 are examples of some of these screendance works in which performers look directly at the lens of the camera.

Figure 31. *Sardinas* **(**Anderson 1990).
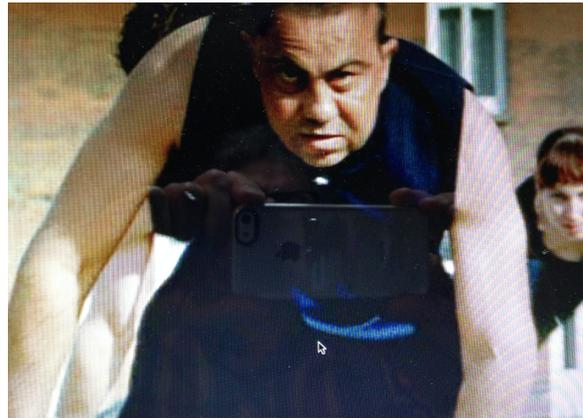
Figure 32. *The Cost of Living* (Newson 2005).

Figure 33. *Magnetic North* (Pennell 2003).

Figure 34. *Moving City* (Chowdhury 2015).

Figure 35. *Fold* (Ramphal 2004).

Figure 36. *Horizon of Exile* (Rocamora 2007).

Figure 37. *Men* (Williams 1997).
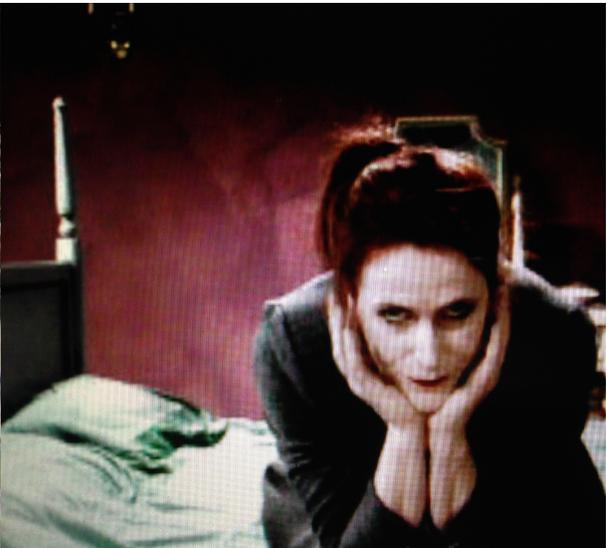
Figure 38. Motion Control (Anderson 2001).

Though these films represent a wide range of styles within the genre of screendance, the frequency of lens/eye contact suggests a significant difference, in the performer/camera relationship, between screendance works and conventional works of narrative cinema. This apparent willingness to acknowledge the camera reveals 'the material existence of the recording process' (Mulvey 1975, p.15), and acknowledges a relationship between dancer and camera.

Lens/eye contact and handheld camera both promote an increased awareness, for the spectator, of camera presence and thus its relationship with the performer. When combined, they essentially draw attention to the camera twice. In my film *Six* (Lewis-Smith 2014), shot with a steadicam (Sony F100 camera), I chose to combine the two at the very end of the film with the intension of retrospectively suggesting an additional layer of the dancer/camera relationship (Chapter 4, p.77). This aspect of *Six* will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 7.

Figure 39. Still from *Six* (Lewis-Smith 2014). Dancer makes eye contact with camera.

In addition to screendance makers apparent willingness to bridge the divide between dancer and camera through lens/eye contact, enhanced if the camera is handheld, awareness of Mulvey's 'material existence of the recording process' is, in some screen dance works, given additional prominence through direct reference to the apparatus of filmmaking itself. In Tricia Brown's film *Accumulation with Talking plus Watermotor* (1987), the viewer witnesses a range of other-than-the-dance elements during Brown's performance, the central focus of the film. This includes the arrival of others into the film's studio location as it is being shot, a small group of seated watchers, and, importantly, a brief wide shot of the room that includes film lighting and cables. There is a sense that we are witnessing the filming event itself, although at no time do we actually see the camera(s). The viewer may sense camera presence through the film's mobile framing and

through Brown addressing the lens directly. Additionally, although no camera is seen, film lights and cables are can be seen in the studio, evidencing the mechanisms of filmmaking (figure 40).

Figure 40. Still from *Accumulation with Talking plus Watermotor*. (Brown 1979). The paraphernalia of filming clearly visible.

A similar 'behind the scenes' insight into the dancing/filming event is evidenced in Katrina McPherson's *Sense8* (2001*)*. Here the camera is made apparent through its movement as it travels in amongst the dancers taking the viewer in amongst the dance action. In *Sense8* the filming mechanism is made further explicit through sections of pixelated black and white shots cut into the higher quality colour footage. Similar to *Accumulation with Talking plus Watermotor* these sections show a wide shot of a studio in which the dancing/filming event is taking place but additionally reveal Neville Kid operating a camera on a dolly track. Commenting on the filming of *Sense8*, McPherson noted how: 'Neville became part of the mix' (McPherson 2014), suggesting the kind of integration within the dancing/filming event discussed in the previous chapter. The changes in image quality and the inclusion of a time-code in the top right hand corner of the screen in some sections, reference a further

layer of the filmmaking process (figure 25). Additionally, McPherson herself can be seen in some sections filming, close to the dancers with a handheld camera.

Figure.41. Still from *Sense8* (McPherson 2001). Camera and tracks clearly visible and timecode displayed top right.

Brown's revelation of the dancing/filming event in *Accumulation with Talking plus Watermotor* corresponds to the postmodern style that is characteristic of much of her early work as briefly discussed in Chapter 2. McPherson's film reflects a similar aesthetic. The style of these, and other works in which the dancing/filming event becomes part of the film, suggests a creative approach that narrows the gap between the dancing/filming event and the viewing, as does the apparent willingness, in screendance works, for direct dancer/camera interaction through looking at the lens.

The findings of Chapter 2 suggested that the dancer/camera divide is narrower in shoots that involve fewer people, particularly so if those behind the lens have links with the dance community. Both Brown and McPherson are directly related to this community, Brown as a practicing dancer and McPherson as a trained dancer. As discussed in Chapter 2, there is a sense that the worlds on each side of the lens, in dancing/filming events, are far more connected when those present engage in both, than when the skills and experiences of those present lie predominantly on one side or the other. Additionally, in the former situation, it is apparent that a desire often exists to blur the boundaries between the two. In

the making of my film *The Glasshouse* (2016) I set out blur these boundaries to the point where they no longer existed. The making of this film is central to the journey of this research and will be discussed in detail in Chapter 8.

A desire to reveal the dancing/filming event is reflected in some of my other work, notably the films from which this thesis emerged: *Watergate Bay* (Lewis-Smith 2007) and *Bodmin Whale* (Lewis-Smith2009. Set in the Cornish landscape, both films draw on improvisation and reveal camera/camera operator presence (figures 26 – 29). My decision to reveal this emerged from my awareness of, and wish to bridge, the divide that I perceived between the dancers, and myself, in the final viewing experience. I sensed that I too was a performer here, just as I was in my work with Karla Shacklock discussed in Chapter 3. As the dancers improvised, I responded by improvising with my camera, reacting to the movement material as it emerged. The improvisational nature of the performances necessitated that I react, rather than prepare a score for the camera, and the dancers and I were often physically close together generating movement interactions between us.

Figure 42. Still from *Watergate Bay* (Lewis-Smith 2007). Revealing the camera.

Figure 43. Still from *Watergate Bay* (Lewis-Smith 2007). Revealing shadow of the camera and operator.

Figure 44. Still from *Bodmin Whale* (Lewis-Smith 2009). Revealing dancer and camera operator relationship.

Figure 45. Still from *Bodmin Whale* (Lewis-Smith 2009). Corresponding 'other' camera view from figure 44.

Both of these films are characterised by a hand held camera operating close to and amongst the dancers and both reveal brief glimpses of the camera. In *Bodmin Whale*, two cameras were used and both are revealed in the film, by each other. In addition a brief shot of dancer and both camera operators talking, filmed on an unattended camera left running, appears at the film's end (figure 29). Both films were made some years prior to my embarking on the research for this thesis but both indicate an approach to narrowing the divide that I have identified as existing on each side of the lens. Through my background as a dancer I feel connected to other dancers. The camera interferes with this connection as soon as it is introduced into the performance event, and my choice to include both sides of the dancing/filming event in the ultimate screen event come from a desire to re-join the two.

I identified at the start of this chapter how camera movement and performer eye contact with the lens both promote an increased awareness, by the viewer, of camera presence and of the camera's relationship with the performer. Direct visual evidence of the filming event, as also discussed, reveals a further layer of the filmmaking practice that lies behind the work that is finally presented on screen. *Motion Control* (2002), as discussed in the

previous chapter, has all three of these qualities and additionally defines the camera as having a character through its movement combined with Aggiss' responses. For example, in section two of the film, Aggiss continually looks directly at the camera while she and the camera challenge one another, competing for domination over the space between them by moving towards and away from one another as an on-screen *pas de deux*. The more the camera engages in the dance, through its own movement and interaction with the dancer, the more kinaesthetic the connection between dancer and screen spectator, replacing passive observation with a sense of active physical engagement.

The viewing of film, like any experience, happens in the real-time linear narrative of our consciousness. However, film narrative commonly represents a sense of disrupted consciousness through editing, and is able to jump from one viewpoint to another or from one time to another. Although camera movement may engender a kinaesthetic transfer of movement energy from the screen to the spectator, and although a further sense of connection to the dancing/filming event may occur through performer eye contact and through evidence of the mechanism of production, editing denies the spectator a parity of consciousness with performer and camera operator. Conversely, the longer the take, the more the spectator may align the uninterrupted action unfolding on screen with their own uninterrupted consciousness.

Joe White's action thriller *Hannah* (2011) includes a two minute twenty-nine second take in which the camera is constantly on the move. It follows the journey of ex-CIA operative Eric Heller (Erik Bana) from a bus station, along a pedestrian precinct, and down into a subway where he becomes involved in a fight. The pathway of the camera, with Heller in shot at all times, is sometimes the same as that the character, and at other times it takes a different course, circling him, taking in the surroundings, suggesting Heller's point of view as he pays attention to his surroundings. Early in the take it moves parallel to Heller's pathway to follow his progress from the other side of the precinct, and a man behind a pillar, so privileging the viewer with information unseen by Heller. The camera then overtakes Heller to show the viewer what is behind him. It then descends a subway elevator looking back at Heller who glances back to see a man following him. The entire camera viewpoint is at eye level, moving at human speed. But the point of view switches between Heller's and that of an anonymous watcher who is following the action unobserved.

On reaching the subway below, Heller is surrounded by four men. Remaining at eye level, the camera continues to travel, turning a full circle, as if Heller is appraising the situation as the men close in to attack him. The fight begins and the camera moves close to the action, circling round the action two and a half times over the 30 seconds of fight time. Constantly moving, it picks up each man as he attacks, or is attacked by, Heller. It creates for the viewer a sense of involvement in the action, and mirrors Heller's need to be aware of his surroundings and to keep alert to whatever is to come next.

Commenting on the fight scene, Banna gives the sense of inclusion that there was for actors and camera operatives alike in the filming event: 'It becomes more like a sport. The cameraman, the focus puller, the guy dragging the cables, everyone has to be absolutely perfect on one take. So it does become more like a live performance' (Bana 2016). Bana's observation of the live performance quality is perhaps mirrored in the fact that there are no cuts in the screen viewing experience, paralleling, as a live stage performance would do, the temporal continuity of the viewer's consciousness. My film *Six* (Lewis-Smith 2015), which is based on this fight scene, is shot in a single-take. I discuss this in some detail in Chapter 7, with reference to its qualities as a *pas de deux* and the camera point of view that the single-take nature of the film present in its viewing.

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CHAPTER 6. THE LONG-TAKE

> An examination of historically decreasing average shot lengths in mainstream cinema and screendance, leading to an examination of the long-take as a style of filming dance that can narrow the divide between dancer, camera operator, and viewer.

Annabelle's Serpentine Dance (William Dickson and William Heise 1894) was, like all other films in the first half decade of cinema, shot in a single-take. These early films were made within the technological restrictions of the time. Limitations included film spool durations (less than a minute), static cameras, as the first swivelling camera was designed in 1897 (Pradeep n.d.), and no sound recording facilities. Films like *Annabelle's Serpentine Dance* reflected the music hall theatre, from which they drew their content, both in viewing position and in their 'real-time' narratives.

Georges Méliès's eleven minute long *The Trip to the Moon* (1902) represented an evolvement from the single-take style of films like *Annabelle's Serpentine Dance* by having thirty shots, each linked to the next, to create a story. This film reflected a stage production by having scenes viewed from a fixed vantage point that represented the position of an ideally-positioned audience member in a theatre. Other filmmakers of the time, however, used editing to construct stories in a manner that liberated film from the restriction of narratives premised on unity of time and place. *Fire* (1901) directed by James Williamson, and the remarkably similar *Life of an American Fireman* (1902) directed by Edwin S. Porter, both construct stories using scenes filmed in different locations, and assemble action in a manner that represents the beginning of montage editing. I here use the term 'montage' in the way Bazin defined it, as '...the creation of a sense of meaning not objectively contained within the images themselves but derived exclusively from their juxtaposition' (Bazin 2005, p.25).

In this chapter I shall examine how edited film, as opposed to single-take film, is normal and has evolved to a point where film shot lengths are becoming progressively shorter. I propose that the 'long-take' however, filmed with a mobile-camera in small-scale contemporary screendance productions, holds the potential to further narrow the divide, that I have discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, between the dancer on one side of the lens and those on the other.

I have found that there are few single-take contemporary screendance works, and fewer still that are shot with a mobile camera (Appendix 11). This chapter lays the groundwork for examining the single-take screendance in the chapter that follows it. I initially examine how shot lengths in both mainstream film and screendance have become progressively shorter over the twentieth century, and continue to do so. I then consider whether the single-take film holds the potential to create a close dancer/camera relationship during production, and to bring a dancing/filming event to the screen in a form that brings the spectator unusually close to the dancing/filming event. In addition, the chapter acknowledges 'depth of focus' as a related element that impacts on the spectator's experience of a dancing/filming screen event. Though focus is not central to this thesis, I note it because the trajectory of this research journey passes close to it and is relevant to work of my own that forms part of my overall enquiry.

In contrast to single-take film construction like *Annabelle's Serpentine Dance*, editing is standard practice in filmmaking. Cheryl Dodds suggests that: 'This [editing] convention has evolved and become established to such an extent that to see a piece of unedited filming can appear extremely alien to the eye' (Dodds 2004, p.32). Dodd's observation draws attention to the possibility that unedited/long-take film may actually be disruptive to the conventional visual grammar that helps us navigate film narrative, and so too our viewing experience For screendance-makers, editing presents a second choreographic layer within the creative process, allowing a re-construction of what has been caught on camera, in order to create new rhythms, movement trajectories, emotions, and meaning in the way that only film can do. Most contemporary screendance works take advantage of this and findings from research done as a part of this thesis in collaboration with students at Bath Spa University, suggest that the duration of shots in screendances are progressively shortening (Appendix 11).

Available data clearly indicates that the average shot length in mainstream cinema became progressively shorter over the twentieth century and continues to do so. Film historian Yuri Tsivian's analysis of shot lengths taken from The University of Chicago *Cinemetrics* database (Tsvivian 2006) suggests that the fastest film made between 1902 and 1909 had an average shot length (ASL) of 15.8 seconds, considerably faster than Méliès's *The Trip to the Moon* (1902)*,* which averages 38.5 seconds per shot. Cinema blogger Anthony Watkins calculates that throughout the Classical Hollywood period, the average shot length was about 12 seconds. (Watkins 2015). David Bordwell suggests that, between the 1930s

and the 1960s the average shot length in a feature film[1] was between eight and eleven seconds. These findings are comparable to Watkins's, given that Classical Hollywood Cinema dated roughly from the 1930s to early 1950s. During the 1980s shot lengths decreased again to an average of between five and seven seconds (Tsvivian 2006). They are currently, on average, faster still. Bordwell noted, in 2006, that many film shot lengths averaged less than five seconds. (Bordwell 2006, p.121/122). Data drawn from the *Cinemetrics* database referencing twenty-one films made during 2014 and 2015 calculates their average shot lengths as 4.01 seconds. [2]

My own research suggests a similar trend of decreasing average shot lengths in screendance works. The research (see Appendix 11) compares average shot length data gathered from screendance works and can be compared to the trend of increasingly short shot lengths in mainstream cinema. The research covers two four year periods that are recent enough for there to be a significant body of screendance work upon which to draw. The periods are 1993 to 1996 and 2013 to 2016, and the criteria that I used for selecting screendances were that the films needed to have been screened, either in a cinema, on television, or at a festival, or published via VHS/DVD. Films that are published on-line are included if they have won an award or special acknowledgement, for example Vimeo's 'Directors Choice'. These recent time periods have been selected because more historical screendance/mainstream film comparisons may be more problematic. This is because few screendance works, compared to the number of mainstream cinema films, were produced prior to the 1980s, resulting in a limited statistical pool for this research.

My research clearly shows a change in shot length of screendances between the selected periods. It found that the average shot length of my chosen samples of screendance works in the four-year period 1993 to 1996 was 11.2 seconds. The average shot length of screendance works in the four-year period 2013 to 1916 was 5.3 seconds. Like mainstream cinema, screendance shot lengths have in recent decades, on average, been getting much shorter.

Sean Macaulay suggests that 'modern' films with dance content are: '…the bastard offspring of MTV' and that: 'Their dynamism is entirely driven by rapid editing and close ups' (Macaulay 2004). He suggests that this editing style may serve to cover up poor dancing. His cynicism may or may not be born out by fact, but this style is perhaps spawned by the evolution of a filmmaker/audience negotiation that drives and is driven by a

desire to view dance in new ways. Jenelle Porter, curator at Artists Space in New York notes how:

> The impact of music videos on visual culture is pervasive, and much like the influence of film (and in turn MTV's influence of film), you know it's there but it's difficult to pinpoint. …There's no way, nor a reason, to deny that the visual vocabulary of the music video – quick cuts, juxtaposition, montage – invades contemporary art (Porter 2010, p.61).

Where Macaulay and Porter imply that decreasing shot lengths may be industry driven, film blogger Greg Miller suggests that it is also 'viewer' driven. He suggests that there is an ever-decreasing attention span from viewers and that:

> Every time a new shot is presented or whenever the camera cuts, the audience is presented with something new and has to adjust to the new position or arrangement of the scene. This tends to keep them more interested (Miller 2014).

As with MTV, television advertising also uses rapid cut action sequences as a mode of presentation, with one or two cuts per second not being unusual in action sequences. The two forms are not without connection as directors who produced successful television advertisements often made early music videos (Brooks 2003, p.59). Although screendance may cater for audiences with particular artistic sensibilities, there is no reason to suppose that they would not pick up on the effects and possibilities presented in broader screen culture. Music Videos and screendance have much in common and many works comfortably exist in both categories as 'Music Video Dance'.[3] An example of this crossover can be seen in the single-take film *Wide Open* (2015). Directed by Dom & Nic, the film illustrates a track of the same name from The Chemical Brothers's album *Born in the Echoes* (2015). Wayne McGregor, resident choreographer for the Royal Ballet, made the choreography, which was performed by Sonoya Mizuno. Music videos commonly draw on dance but might be identified as such by, for example, being titled by the name of the music/song, lasting as long as the music, having the singer shown singing, and crediting the singer/band rather than the choreographer or dancer. Buckland notes how:

> Choreographers of western theatrical dance are generally accorded individual recognition as authors of their dance works. In the context of the music video, however, anonymity for the choreographer appears to be the norm, especially if

they do not already enjoy a public reputation as a choreographer (Buckland 1998, p.279).

Works that occupy a middle ground, such as *Born in the Echoes* are arguably both screendances and music videos, and may err into one category or the other depending on the watcher's interests and the watched in context. A middle ground work screened at a dance film festival might be perceived as a screendance work, as it has been located there by the curators and is experienced primarily for its choreographic content by an audience with dance interests. The same work screened in a music video environment might be perceived differently, for the same reasons, and be experienced more for the music content.

With action and energy at the heart of lots of dance, it would seem reasonable that screendance-makers might in turn be keen to appropriate the rapid cut aesthetic of music video filmmaking. Buckland observes how: 'A number of music videos [use] rapid editing of dancing figures' (Buckland 1998, p.285). An example of rapid cutting in screendance can be found in Katrina McPherson's *Pace* (1995). In one section (2.30 – 2.46 into the film), the average shot length is 0.34 seconds, considerably shorter than the average 11.2 second average for the period.

My research (Appendix 11) indicates that screendance works not only have decreasing shot lengths but also are getting shorter overall. This in itself has no obvious bearing on decreasing shot lengths but is perhaps also part of a roader tendency. The average duration of thirty-six selected screendances made from 1993 to 1996 is just over fourteen and a half minutes. The average duration of the same number of works made between 2013 and 2016 is just under five minutes.

The funding for longer works that was made available to UK screendance makers by Channel 4 and the BBC in the 1990's is no longer available and it would not seem unreasonable to suppose that funding constraints in the Arts generally could be a factor in the decreasing duration of screendance works. Miller's observation suggests a watching culture that loses attention quickly but it must be remembered that attention spans may vary according to the viewing environment. When watching a film in a cinema there is no option to change to another channel, or switch to another movie, and the film may be between one and two hours long. A ticket has been bought and the ritual of cinema

attendance embarked upon. Audience members will have set the time aside to watch the full film and it is unusual for people to leave halfway.

Some contemporary screendances are shown in a cinema environment at selected film festivals, but these represent the selected few. Most are available to view on-line. Of the 31 films included in my ASL database that were made between 2013 and 2016, all but two are available on-line. On-line or television film watching is quite different from cinema viewing. It may be done alone. There are multiple options available to view at any time. If you pause or switch to another a film, there is always the possibility of recording the rest of the film and returning later to complete the watching. If you watch alone there are no compromises to be made if another viewer wishes to continue to watch and you do not, and there is always the possibility that there is a better film instantly available if the one you are watching looses your interest at any point. These factors engender a different viewing culture to that of cinema film watching, one in which perseverance is limited and in which short films are more likely than long ones to be seen from start to finish. [3]

The above reasons may perhaps contribute in varying degrees to the trend towards shorter screendance works. Feature film lengths, in contrast, have changed comparatively little. According to analysis of all feature films in the IMDB database the average feature film length in 1940 was approximately 82 minutes and the average in 2013 approximately 85 minutes (Olson 2014), fundamentally different from the trend in screendance works. The mechanisms surrounding commercial cinema, and its specific viewing rituals may be in no small part responsible for the consistency of mainstream film duration. In screendance however, the trends are towards shortness.

Decreasing ASLs and overall film lengths in screendance are at odds with the extended durations of long-takes. As shots become, on average, progressively shorter, longer shots feel, by comparison, longer. There is no set duration that defines a shot as a long-take, but a number of factors can still be put into play to categorise a long-take. These include shot duration in comparison to surrounding shot durations, (i.e. a duration that is sufficient to allow the viewer to become aware that the camera viewpoint has been unchanged for a significant length of time). In addition, long-takes with a static camera may be perceived differently from ones with a moving camera. A static shot has more of an unchangingness to it than a moving one, and may therefore be more quickly perceived as being 'long' as

compared to the experience of viewing a tracking shot with a continually shifting perspective.

Alfonso Cuarón's *Gravity* (2013) has a seventeen-minute single-take opening sequence. At what time the viewer becomes aware of the sequence as being unusually long depends on each individual. It would not seem unreasonable that some viewers might not be aware at all of the absence of cuts in the sequence. However, for the duration of the shot, the viewer shares an uninterrupted period of time, albeit at a *different* time, with the camera operator and the performer. The screen presentation is not assembled from a series of shots and so represents a version of the filmed event that might be considered indicative of how it evolved in front of the camera (as long as projection speed equals the original camera speed). If the camera is also mobile and engages in the choreography, as in *Nine Variations on a Dance Theme* (Harris 1966), the kinaesthetic transference to the screen spectator, as discussed in Chapter 5, creates the possibility of a closer connection with the performer/camera, and the dancing/filming event.

Miller observes that: 'Whenever the camera cuts the audience is presented with something new and has to adjust to the new position or arrangement of the scene' (Miller 2015). With the moving camera the viewer is progressively presented with 'something new... a new position or compositional arrangement'. In the opening section of *Gravity* and in each section of *Nine Variations on a Dance Theme*, the viewer is presented with a continually changing viewing perspective. I use these two films as examples as they demonstrate these similarities, but they also demonstrate particular differences. A quality that closes the gap between the spectator and the performing/filming event in the long-take is the possibility of the re-enactment of the original event. In the case of *Gravity*, the footage has been considerably manipulated in postproduction. The wires that enable performer Sandra Bullock to appear to be floating in zero gravity are, through digital post-production, made invisible to the film spectator, as is the studio's green-screen background. Coupled with the camera pathway that is facilitated by the mechanical arm that controls its trajectory rapidly through space, this means that it would not be possible for a person to reproduce the performance event as seen on the screen, even though the sequence is an unbroken one. With *Nine Variations on a Dance Theme* it would be possible to reproduce this, were the viewer themselves to be in the same room beside a dancer performing the same choreography. It would be perfectly possible for a dancer to learn and reproduce the choreography, and for a camera operator to learn and reproduce the camera pathway.

Even if the original room where the filming took place were not available, it would be possible to approximate it with another.

With a humanly reproducible style of hand-held camera filming, the screen viewer is able to sense a physical interaction between dancer and camera operator and thus a kinaesthetic transfer occurs, across time and place, via the mechanisms that transfer the light that enters the camera lens into the light that represents the dancing/filming event on a screen.

The possibility of the replication of the dancing/filming event in real time, with a single unbroken viewpoint, provides a link between this event and the viewer. It is not possible to replicate the movements of Sandra Bullock floating in zero gravity is inaccessible. The movements of dancer Bettie de Jong in each section of *Nine Variations on a Dance Theme* is perhaps more accessible, as are those of dancer Cathy Nicoli my own seventeen minute single-take film *To Be Watched While eating an Orange* (2014). In *To be Watched While Eating an Orange*, like in each section of *Nine Variations on a Dance Theme*, there are no cuts in the dancing/filming event, and there is only one dancer and one camera operator. The pathway travelled by dancer and camera through the film's location is publically accessible, the perspective of the camera is never higher or lower than would be possible to experience with normal eyesight, as is the speed of its travel. It would even be possible to listen to the soundtrack whilst reproducing the event.

These films, I argue, enable enhanced relationships between performer, camera/camera operator, and viewer. In edited films the camera operator's experience is less evident as there is no representation of an unbroken line of consciousness. In the production events of *Nine Variations on a Dance Theme* and *To Be Watched While Eating an Orange*, the dancer/camera is perhaps as equal as it can be, and the divide between the dancer and camera/camera operator is at its most minimal. Cathy Nicoli, the dancer in the film, commenting on my role as camera operator notes:

> You were in fact more of a dance partner than a cameraman, mostly during the dancing in the vacant studio, but also while I rolled the oranges toward you, and even while I was waiting for you to arrive upon me in the parking lot (Nicoli 2016).

Under the dancing/filming condition of the one-on-one single-take film there are no other dancers to be included in the balance of performers in front of the lens, and no other

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camera or camera/operator behind the lens. The only consciousness that the dancer can interact with is that of the camera operator, and the only consciousness that the camera operator can interact with is that of the dancer: the essence of a *pas de deux*.

Although a digression from the main focus of this research narrative, there is a further element that I shall briefly discuss, as it might be considered supportive of the spectator's connection to the dancing/filming event. This concerns focus. Cinematographers commonly draw the viewer's attention to one particular element of screen composition through the use of a shallow field of focus. Though the area focussed upon may be small in comparison to the entire screen area, if isolated in sharp focus it draws our attention, just as it is our 'real life' visual experience to have the centre of our attention in focus. From the cinematographer's perspective, this provides a tool to support the construction of meaning through drawing attention to that which is central to narrative at any one point. The shallow field of focus is so prevalent in filmmaking that it is artificially created in animated films, to create the 'look' and the narrative focus that an be achieved in live action by the lens.

In 'real life' looking however, that which may be out of focus is only ever within our peripheral vision and cannot be the focus of our attention. As soon as we look at something in our peripheral vision it comes into focus. By contrast screen looking, where there is a shallow field of focus, allows the viewer to look directly at something that is out of focus. Film that has a deep field of focus provides the viewer with the option of looking at different parts of the screen, all of which may be in focus, replicating, in two dimensions, the sensation of 'real life' looking. Bazin notes how: '…depth of focus brings the spectator into a relation with the image closer to that which he enjoys with reality. Therefore it is correct to say that, independently of the content of the image, its structure is more realistic' (Bazin 1967, p.35).

Bazin goes on to suggest that deep focus promotes: '…a more active mental attitude on the part of the spectator and a more positive contribution on his part to the action in progress' (Bazin 1967, p.35). Where a shallow field of focus allows the filmmaker to direct the viewer's attention to a specific part of the image on the screen, the deep field allows the viewer to exercise choice regarding what part of the screened image he or she wishes to look at, an option that reflects the real life looking experience. A deep field of focus then, coupled with the dancer/camera operator pas de deux, shot and screened as a long or single-take dancing/filming event is, I argue, a particular combination of factors that can

help bring the dancer, camera, and spectator within a single field of experience as a *pas de trois*. [(4)].

Films that begin with a long-take may, for the viewer, create a sense of a *pas de trois*, but as soon as there is a 'cut', the link between the film experience and real-time consciousness experience is severed. Merce Cunningham and Charles Atlas's film *Locale* (1977), is an example of this. The first cut in the film happens at two minute fifty-five seconds. Until this point the steadicam mounted camera interacts seamlessly with the dancers as it travels through the space amongst them and the viewer is presented with the (performance) past and (viewing) present running in parallel.

Where *Nine Variations on a Dance Theme* is shot in a small room, *Locale* is shot in a large studio, affording the camera the possibilities of travelling through the space to film the dancers both in close up and from a distance, shifting attention from one group of dancers to another, while camera and dancer often move from being far away to being very close to one another.

Commenting on the kinetic qualities of the filming, Atlas noted how: 'The steadicam enables us to give the work a freer, faster kind of feeling' (cited by Porter 2009, p.135) [(5)]. However, the viewing experience of Atlas's work attracted some negative feedback. Vaughan notes how:

> The motion of the camera in *Locale* proved to be unsettling to many viewers, and especially to dance audiences who have different expectations as to how dance should be viewed and perceived. The movements of the camera in *Locale* apparently caused some viewers to experience something close to motion sickness. It also created an effect, which caused some viewers to complain about 'being robbed of their autonomy' (Vaughan 1997, p.153).

Dance critic Marcia Siegel agrees:

> Moving Cameras can make me dizzy at the best of times. […] I'm often impelled to give up my own centre and submit to an external motion that I can neither predict nor control. Atlas's lens moves, and it looks at moving dancers, and the camera itself moves as he travels with it through space. Looking at the image that results I

not only lose my own centre, but have to let the image go at the same time as I am perceiving it (Siegel 1991, p.102).

Though these remarks carry a negative connotation, they clearly indicate that the mobile camera, moving amongst the dancers, conveyed a sense of kinesthesia from the screen to the viewers.

In *Locale* and *Nine Variations on a Dance Theme,* as the single camera shares space and moves with the dancers, it mimics the movement of another performer. But is never seen, as it cannot turn its lens upon itself any more than we can look at our own faces. Not withstanding looking at a reflective surface or at shadows, the camera's identity is only manifest by the way it moves, the way it views other performer(s), and the surroundings, and the by way the performers interact with it. In Chapter 7 I specifically explore how camera identity might be revealed through its relationship with the performer in the single-take screendance.

REFERENCES: page 158. FILMOGRAPHY: page 165.

CHAPTER 7. THE SINGLE-TAKE

> Extending the discussion about the single-take screendance supporting a unique dancer/camera/screen viewer relationship, to a discussion concerning 'points of view' and a perceived limitation with single-take films. Analysis, in this context, of selected screendances including my films *To be Watched While Eating an Orange* and *Six* (practices 3 and 4).

In Chapter 6, I observed how long-take and single-take contemporary screendance, highlighted against the trend of increasingly short shot lengths in films generally, represents a largely unused form of filmmaking. Research for this thesis has revealed only limited examples of such productions so in order to explore the potential of this form I have made four single-take films. Details of all these films can be found in my screendance average shot-length database (Appendix 11). In this chapter I examine two of my single-take films as part of a broader selection of single-take works. I suggest that a moving camera single-take screendance work may suggest the point of view, among other possibilities, of someone (or something) who is motivated to observe the dance but is never seen, and whose identity can only be constructed by a mixture of camera movement, camera positioning, on-screen hints, and the viewer's consciousness.

Mary-Ann Doane comments on the notion that cinema engenders a sense of familiarity with life, in that it reflects the moving/happening world that we inhabit. She notes that this familiarity has limitations:

> Imposed by the necessity of an ending, which is always yoked to the arbitrary, given the fact that things go on, while the film cannot. This limit is mirrored or mimicked internally by the cut, which disrupts and shatters the continual unfolding of real time of the shot (Doane 2004, p.261-2).

Doane's observation applies to all screendances in that they always end, unless perhaps they loop.[1] Looped film however must at some point return to its start and cannot therefore truly represent the continual unfolding of real time. However for the duration of a long-take, or a whole film if it is a single-take, a film might, temporarily at least, mirror a 'real' continuous unfolding of time, which reflects our own conscious experience and supports a connection between the original dancing/filming event and the screen viewer. In this context, edited film can only provide a temporally inauthentic experience, a visual narrative

unrepresentative of human consciousness. Edited film has the power to provoke sensations by re-assembling fragments of images, sounds, and perspectives in a manner that reflects qualities of events, but it cannot reflect the linear nature of a conscious lived experience. For example, the fast cuts of the car chase sequence in *Heat* (Michael Mann 1995) mirror the fast reactions associated with an adrenaline rush in a dangerous situation, but do not mirror what a driver would actually see in such a situation. Similarly in the dance sequence in *Pride and Prejudice* (Joe Wright 2005) the party guests surrounding Mathew MacFadyen and Keira Knightley's duet are made to disappear as the couple dance. This editing illustrates how they are entirely absorbed in one another's presence, but the disappearing party guests are not what we, as observers, would really see.

Though edited film like these examples present to the viewer the qualities of an event, only the single-take film shot with a steadicam or a handheld camera, at angles, heights and speeds that are humanly replicable, can imitate the unfolding of an event that could be experienced in real time. Branigan proposes aspects of camera use that support this replicable view point:

> One property of a camera, for example, that may be described as being analogous to a human property is based on the position of the camera in diegetic spaces: is such a position in space a possible or usual place of viewing that a human observer might or would take in order to see a particular thing? Does the camera have a view and act in a way comparable to what we might imagine for a human observer? Also relevant are the height and angle of the camera, and the focal length of the lens (and perhaps focus, film stock, and filters). In addition, if the camera is moving, then it's speed, rhythm, and acceleration will be relevant if it's movement is to be matched to a human movement, such as the movement of a person's body (Branigan 2006, p.37).

In the production of a single-take screendance, the dance has to really happen, from start to end as it is shot. Unlike fragmented shooting for edited film, there are no pauses between sections to be filmed from a different angle, and no pickups to catch a close up or a wide shot. The camera and dancer perform the work from the beginning to the end in the same way that a live performance on stage would unfold.

This shooting style creates particular demands on everyone involved on the production event as I shall discuss later. The moving steadicam or hand held camera also creates a consistent perspective that never reveals a physical character that might own its point of view. The 'looker' in this context is hidden by the very nature of the shooting style, as in our own conscious living experience where we do not see our own faces except in a reflection. Branigan proposes multiple possible points of view embodied by the camera: 'The author, implied author, ideal spectator, tacit narrator, explicit narrator, invisible observer, character, ideal spectator, or actual spectator, to name a few possibilities' (Branigan 2006, p.40). Any of these may apply in the single-take film. However, if the camera's point of view is structured in a way that suggests that what we experience is what a 'character' or an 'actual spectator' experiences, then the physicality of this person is never revealed. Typically, in edited film, the viewer may see someone who is looking, then an implied object of their look, suggesting that this is their viewpoint. With the single-take, the camera's view cannot switch from one to another, the screen spectator is locked into a single physical viewing perspective. Vivien Sobchack remarks: 'Watching a film, we can see the seeing as well as the seen, hear the hearing as well as the heard, and feel the movement as well as see the moved' (Sobchack 1994, p.42). With the single-take film, the seer and the hearer as camera perspectives are physically masked. Only the movement of the camera, the movement of the performers, and sound, remain to suggest points of view.. It is from this position, the never visible character designated to the camera, that this research goes on to explore and challenge through the making of *The Glasshouse* (2016). The findings from this project will be discussed in the last section of this chapter.

As discussed, with a fixed shot the camera provides less evidence of a physical observer than it does when it is moving, and the viewer observes without the possibility of a mediating consciousness suggested by camera movement. Lindgren remarks: 'The movement of the camera draws attention to the imaginary observer whose movements it reproduces' (Lindgren 1963, p.164). The moving camera is also able to distract the viewer from its own possible identity by attaching itself to the identity of a visible other. In the opening section of Christian Larson's screendance *Valtari* (2013) the eye level camera moves in a way that suggests an imaginary observer but this identity may be deflected onto another.

The first two fixed camera shots of the film establish a sense of place, an industrial building in an empty area. The third fixed camera shot (figure 48) shows a person, at a distance,

walking across some waste ground, and the fourth shot (figure 49) is a moving camera 'over-the-shoulder' shot of the person as she walks towards some buildings that might be assumed to be those in shots one and two. In this shot the camera is assigned to share her experience with that of an imaginary observer but the viewer has only one visual physical presence, that of the walking woman. As the film progresses a man is shown dancing inside the building. The shots then alternate between him dancing and her entering and walking through the building. All shots of him are fixed mid to wide-shots, and all shots of her are mobile and are mid- to close-up shots. Up until this point in the film (1.45) the camera work emphasises observation of the male dancer from a remote position, as compared to sharing the experience of the female dancer.

Figure 48. *Valtari* (Larson 2013). Shot 3 with distant person in landscape.

Figure 49. *Valtari* (Larson 2013). Shot 4, mobile camera follows person.

Figure 50. *Valtari* (Larson 2013). Shot 26. Mobile camera follows female dancer who observes male dancer in distance..

Where the camera is mobile and following the female dancer into the building, there is a close movement relationship between them, for example, if she were holding the camera herself it might move in a similar way. Were the moving camera to take the same route across the field and into the building without the woman in shot, there would be no visual 'other' to deflect the point of view onto, and the camera's presence would be foregrounded suggesting an embodied viewpoint.

In Chapter 5 I discussed how the revelation, on screen, of the dancing/filming event reflects the mechanisms of production. In Rodrigo Pardo's single-take film *Uma Toma* (2006) this possibility is turned into a visual motif. In the film the camera travels along a corridor inside a building revealing, through internal windows, action in the rooms that it passes. On seven occasions the camera and its operatives can be seen as it passes reflective surfaces (figures 51 & 52). The dolly-mounted camera movement throughout the film is smooth, and progresses at a consistent speed. Observing the performers through the internal windows promotes a sense of voyeurism but the absence of any movement associated with a steadicam or handheld camera makes possible a viewing territory that combines that of an imaginary observer and of the more passive, removed viewpoint offered by the static camera shot. However, the revelation of the camera and its operators adds the further perspective of the artist at work, the filmmaker's process, and the mechanism by which the spectacle is created. As in my film *Bodmin Whale* (2009), the viewpoints at these moments

become partly owned by those that made the film and the camera's perspective is able to shift between invisible observer and visible camera operator observer.

Figure 51. *Uma Toma* (Pardo 2006). Reflection of camera with operators screen left and right.

Figure 52. *Uma Toma* (Pardo 2006). Reflection of camera tripod on trolley.

The camera operators, Marloeke van de Vlugt and Rodrigo Pardo, are acknowledged in the credits as 'camera operators–performers', which recognises their identity in the film alongside those who perform in front of the lens in the conventional sense. This same recognition is made in my own film *Six* (2014), where the credits acknowledge the performers as being five dancers and one camera, the reason for the film's name. Vlugt and Pardo's interaction with the performers is, however, relatively limited compared to *Six* in which camera mobility is more flexible and is integrated with, and is a part of, the choreography of the performers.

Whenever the camera is revealed in the reflections, *Uma Toma* exposes the mechanisms of the filming event. Clearly the people pulling and pushing the camera are concerning themselves with filmmaking rather than acting or dancing, but by sharing screen space with the dancers and other performers, they acquire a similar status to them. There is no further layer to be revealed, no other camera filming the filmmakers, and as such the entire performing/filming event is self-contained on screen.

The camera in *Uma Toma* is mobile, but not in a fashion in which it interacts with the dancers. Indeed, it remains separated from them by the glass windows through which it is filming, and the operators appear solely concerned with the act of its operation as they push it along on the dolly. In *Six,* although the camera is credited as a performer*,* its implied point of view is different: no reflective surfaces are passed and the camera offers the possible viewpoint of an unseen observer that moves freely among the performers. *Six* was filmed with a steadicam-mounted camera (figure 53), which gave a smoother movement than a handheld camera but a less steady movement than a track-mounted camera as in *Uma Toma*. The resultant movement has more of a suggestion of a human observer than *Uma Toma* but less suggestion of the physicality of a camera-holding observer than *To Be Watched While Eating an Orange* (2014).

Figure 53. Steadicam, minus body vest, on location of *Six* (Lewis-Smith 2014).

In *Six,* the camera's journey through the filming environment provides visual information that suggests a shifting point of view. None of the dancers look at the camera, adhering to Mulvey's observed convention discussed in Chapter 4 where: 'The conscious aim [is] always to eliminate intrusive camera presence' (Mulvey 1975, p.15), until the very last moment of the film when the principle character of the film looks directly at the lens in recognition of the camera's presence (figure 39). The role of the camera as an invisible observer is subverted. The act of observation is presented as a mutual awareness existing between the dancer and the camera: the main dancer's final glance at the camera suggests that she may even have been aware of being observed from the start of the film. Up until this point, the viewer has observed from behind an imaginary fourth wall, but her glance proposes a new range of possible camera/viewer/dancer relationships and the viewer is left to re-negotiate their position retrospectively.

At the start of *Six,* the camera moves out from behind a pillar to observe Lean Oddy, the main dancer, entering the shot. The suggestion of voyeurism is introduced by the fact that the camera is partly hidden (figure 54). The camera then follows her as she travels through an urban space and enters a building, followed by four other dancers. It takes a different path from her, observing her from behind objects, continuing the suggestion of voyeurism (figure 55). The camera then changes from following to leading the dancers and the

possibility of a voyeuristic presence changes, although no one looks at the camera even though it is close to them.

Figure.54. *Six* (Lewis-Smith 2014). Camera views approaching dancer from behind pillar.

Figure.55. *Six* (Lewis-Smith2014). Camera views dancer from behind balustrade.

The camera alternates between following, observing from a distance, and leading, at one point at arm's length, but at no time does Oddy make eye contact with it. The camera viewpoint becomes unmoored, presenting options including a voyeur, an invisible observer, or even perhaps a presence that the performers have simply chosen to ignore. Residing in the space between an explicit revelation of the camera's presence through its movement, and Mulvey's position that aspires to hidden camera presence, the camera's motivation is unclear and multiple viewpoints are possible.

At times the camera passes closely behind objects, obscuring the dancers and the wider environment. Losing touch with them means that as spectators we are momentarily alone. Our 'looking' is bounced back upon ourselves to reference our own consciousness in the act of watching the unfolding screen event. Sobchack asserts: 'What we look at projected on the screen […] addresses us as the expressed perception of an anonymous, yet present, 'other', and as we watch this expressive projection of an 'other's' experience, we, too, express our perceptive experience' (Sobchack 1994, p.40). As the camera passes briefly behind something that obscures the subject whose journey we were sharing, our own 'perceptive experience' as watcher is foregrounded until the subject reappears. The same 'bouncing back' occurs in *Uma Toma* but the camera movement is less characteristic of a human, less like our own movement, than it is in *Six*. In *Six*, the camera movement is suggestive of a person witnessing the event, although little identity is suggested by a rapport with the performers as they do not acknowledge camera presence, until the very end.

In Chelsea McMullan's single-take screendance *Slip* (2012), a more explicit relationship between camera and principal performer develops from early in the film. Here, as at the end of *Six*, only one of the performers acknowledges the camera. *Slip* is set in the woman's changing room of a swimming pool in Toronto. The steadicam-mounted camera (McMullan 2016) slowly approaches a bather who is dyeing her hair at a sink. The bather notices the camera and a flirtatious relationship ensures, lasting until the end of the six-minute film when the bather disappears, leaving the camera searching for her. Unlike *Six* the camera/dancer relationship is clearly illustrated by the interactions between them. The sound of uneven breathing, added to the film in post-production (McMullan 2016), accompanies the camera, establishing a greater sense of a human personality and heightened emotion than in *Six*. The fact that the remaining eighteen dancers in the

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changing room ignore the camera at all times suggests that the camera identity might perhaps be female. McMullan commented:

> Yeah, something that is important to my work, and the work of other people is this idea of the female gaze and the way women look at other women. The cinematographer in the film was a woman; most of the key creatives were women. I think it's really interesting to develop this counter female gaze, and the way that, if the gaze were a male gaze the people in the changing room would have reacted to the camera, it would have been different. I have seen it as being a female gaze, probably representative of myself (McMullan 2016).

The camera's point of view in *Slip* corresponds most clearly to Branigan's 'character' perspective. The camera is clearly motivated throughout the film and corresponds to all of Branigan's 'camera positions' above in regard to replicating human movement. The principal performer maintains eye contact with the camera at all times, except when she is playfully hiding from it. At this point the camera moves left and right trying to find her. The performer hides and the camera finds her and a game of hide and seek happens before the performer disappears completely and the camera is left searching for her in the by then empty changing room.

Of the few single-take screendances that I have identified in the research for this thesis, McMullan's film provides one of the clearest senses of camera point-of-view in relation to performer. The steadicam movement can be readily equated with human movement without highlighting the apparatus itself through the quicker movement associated with 'camera holding' or the smooth movement of the dolly mounted camera, as in *Uma Toma*.

Miranda Pennell's single-take screendance *You Made me Love You* (2005) also makes use of the smooth movement of a dolly-mounted camera, but in contrast to *Uma Toma,* camera presence is foregrounded by the dancers' attention to it. Dancers travel with the camera, as it moves smoothly from one side of a dance studio to the other: all of them maintain eye contact with it all of the time, something that none of the other single-take films that I have found do. The dancers are close to the camera, appearing to be responding to the challenge of maintaining eye contact with the lens (figure 56). The resultant body movement and eye focus, as individual dancers shift their positions in the group to achieve a direct eye-line with the camera, makes for unique screen choreography.

With no visible background with which to reference camera travel, evidence of the sideways travel of the dancers is negated on screen as the camera travels with them. The medium close-up shot does not show the dancers' bodies below the shoulder, leaving the shifting and jostling movement of their travelling bodies appearing to take place as if they they were stationary. The camera movement is smooth, as in *Uma Toma*, making no suggestion of a camera-holding observer, but the sound of the dolly wheels speeding up and slowing down reveals the filming apparatus, and thus the dancing/filming event. Unlike *Slip*, the smooth movement and the sound of the tracks provides no suggestion of personality, but the closeness and unremitting gaze of the dancers nonetheless results in a direct and personal quality. The camera leads and the dancers follow, doing all they can to remain in frame and, in effect, maintain contact with us, the future viewer, through the window of the lens. While in *You Made me Love You,* all of the performers acknowledge the camera all of the time, the camera does not respond to them.
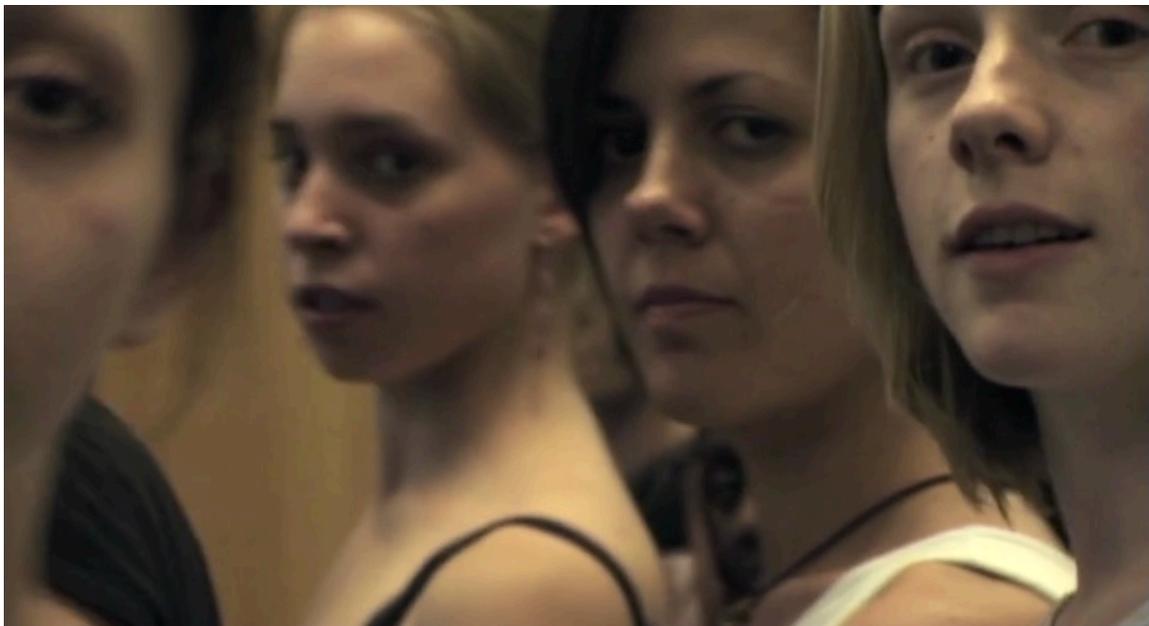
Figure 56. *You Made Me Love You* (Pennell 2005). Dancers maintain eye contact with camera lens.

In the single-take screendance work *Say When* (2013), directed by Jason Jurgens, the camera's identity is again anonymous but the solo dancer, who performs informally in a film studio while technicians set-up around her, makes frequent eye contact with the lens. In contrast to *You Made Me Love You,* the dancer's attention to the camera has the sense of being much more on her own terms. The camera shares the performance space with

dancer Dores Andre, and it is constantly moving with the quality associated with a steadicam, interacting with Andre and creating screen choreography as it circles her, compounding the effect of her own turning. Similarly, with my single-take screendance *Variation 1* (Lewis-Smith 2016), dancer You Zu is circled by a moving camera, but unlike the lit studio setting of *Say When*, Yu is filmed dancing in a studio in which the walls are black and unlit. The absence of a visible background gives the viewer no fixed points against which to register the camera movement and it is unclear if Yu is turning because the camera is circling her, or if she is turning herself.

Say When, like *Six*, involves camera movement that reflects a range of human viewing positions, and so provides a sense of someone looking, following the dancer as the sole focus of attention, but without the hand held quality of my single-take screendance *To Be Watched While Eating an Orange* (Lewis-Smith 2015). In contrast to *Variation 1* and *To Be Watched While Eating an Orange,* where there is no eye contact with the camera, Andre glances at the lens with increasing frequency in the latter part of the film, acknowledging the camera's presence but giving little away as to how she feels about it. At the start, the camera follows Andre down a passageway into a studio where she plugs in an mp3 player, puts on some music, and starts to dance. She makes no eye contact with the camera until approximately a third of the way through the film. Up to this point, the camera's presence, suggestive of a human through its movement, lacks recognition from Andre. At the point where she looks at the camera lens (figure 57) this changes, as it does in *Six*, to retrospectively suggest her awareness of it from the start. The single glance breaks the illusion of invisibility and a new camera/dancer relationship is proposed.
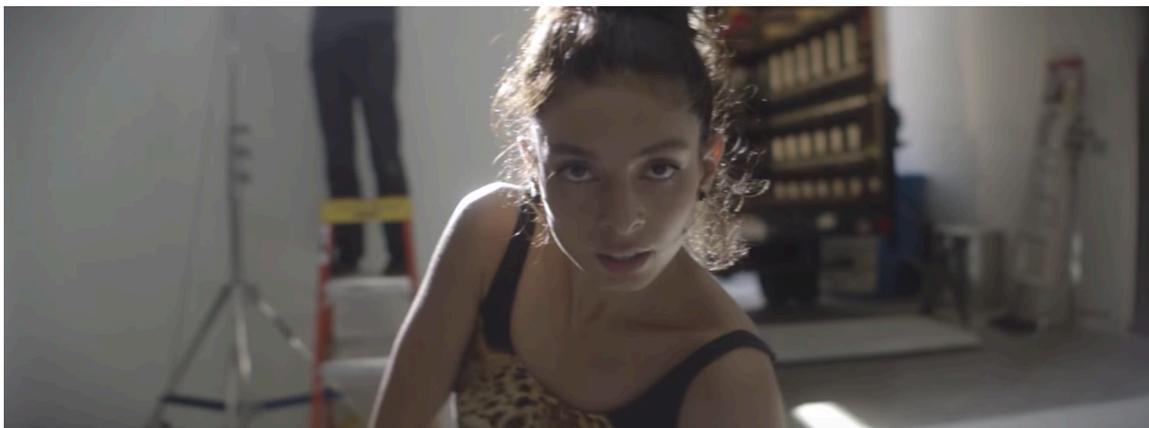
Figure. 57. *Say When* (Jurgens 2013). Dancer making eye contact with the camera.

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In *To Be Watched While Eating an Orange,* the camera closely follows dancer Cathy Nicoli as she journeys through a large converted mill in Rhode Island. During the journey the camera alternates between proceeding ahead of her, travelling alongside her and following her. At other times it separates from Nicoli, taking a path of its own before joining up with her again. At no point however does Nicoli look into the lens, even though at one point the camera circles around her closely as she dances, interacting with her in a *pas de deux* (figure 58) reminiscent of *Six* and *Say When*.
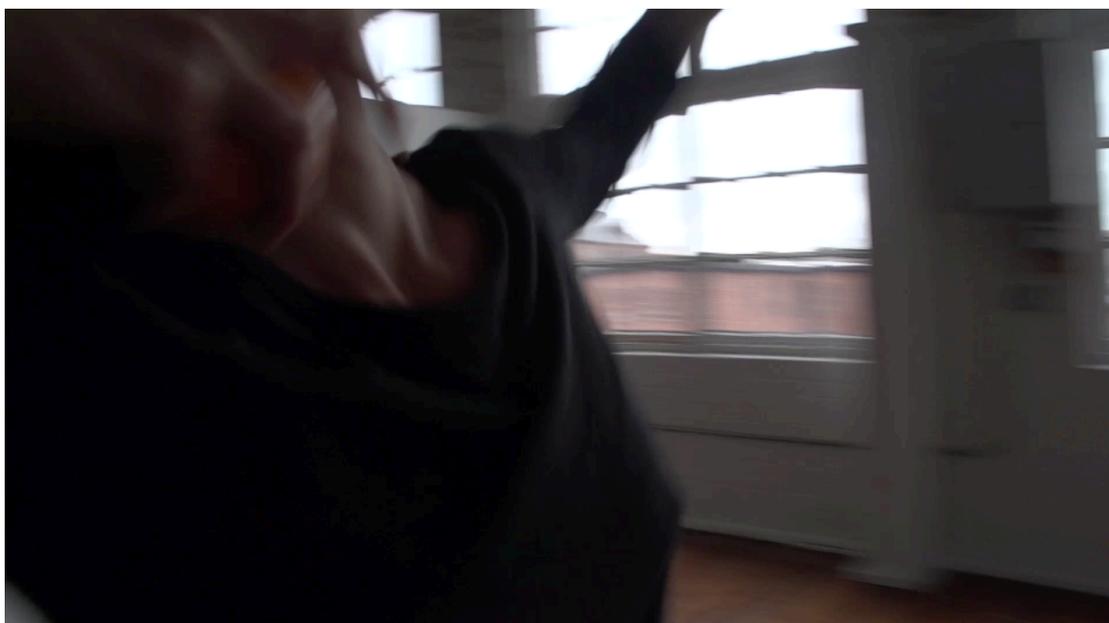
Figure. 58. *To Be Watched While Eating an Orange* (Lewis-Smith 2015). Camera moves closely around Nicoli as in a duet.

The possibility of the camera as an invisible observer is suggested, but so also is the possibility that Nicoli knows it is there but does not wish to acknowledge it, just as one might dance a duet without ever looking at one's partner. The high incidences of eye/lens contact in screendance, discussed in Chapter 4, demonstrate how many screendances do not follow the conventions of fictional cinema. Nicoli was of course aware of the camera, the presence of which is made apparent on screen by the way it moves. The camera as a co-performer, with whom she chose not to interact, is an optional perspective for the viewer. This option resonates with Metz's proposal (Chapter 4) that awareness of camera presence is in some way inevitable (Metz 1977, p.49) and this is the only rational possibility behind the spectacle.

As in *Six*, the camera sometimes loses visual contact with Nicoli and the viewer is denied a connection to her. As I have suggested occurs at the start of *Valtari,* when the camera moves in a manner that reflects the performer, especially when it is close to them, the option of identifying with the point of view of the performer exists. When the performer is not there the identity of the camera as a 'looker' becomes foregrounded.

This sense of 'looking' is not only highlighted at points during the film where the camera passes behind something, but also through the camera observing Nicoli voyeuristically. For example, at one point the camera observes her through a narrow gap as she washes her hands in a female washroom (figure 59).

Figure 59. *To Be Watched While Eating an Orange* (Lewis-Smith 2015). Camera observes Nicoli in washroom.

As the camera observes from outside, it moves slightly sideways, one way and then the other, as if trying to see as much as possible without being caught watching, a movement similar to that of the camera in the second section of Anderson's *Motion Control* (2002). There is a sense that Nicoli might realise that she is being watched if she glanced sideways through the door, and also that the camera is engaged in 'secret looking'. In the following sequence, however, Nicoli sits at a small table eating an orange; the camera slowly advances toward her over three minutes observing her (figure 60) and Nicoli ignores it as it closes in on her. As in *Six* the viewer is left to decide, at this or at any other point in the

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film, on possible camera identity and its relationship with Nicoli, on the basis of the mixed evidence given by each section of the film.

Figure.60. *To Be Watched While Eating an Orange* (Lewis-Smith 2015). Camera advances slowly while Nicoli eats an orange.

Film theorist Elspeth Kydd suggests that the type of screen movement that results from a hand-held camera is associated with documentary film, bringing with it a sense that what is seen on screen was 'witnessed' by the camera and might have happened anyway even if the camera had not been there. She observes: 'Hand-held camera operation establishes a sense of immediacy, that the action is right there, captured by the camera and drawing the audience into the world of the film' (Kydd 2011, p.138).

Kydd's observation brings to camera-work of this kind a sense that 'this really happened'. She suggests that the viewer is drawn into the film, and thus the link between dancer, camera, and viewer may become a conduit through which action can be channelled in a manner that is more effective than with a fixed camera. This handheld camera motion is manifested in my own performance as I accompany Nicoli through the building, resulting from my movement and my point of view. Sometimes my movement mirrored Nicoli's when we were performing in unison. For example, when running along a corridor we fell into step, and when Nicoli slides an orange down a window and a wall, so I slid the camera down beside her.[2] Were I, and the camera, to have always moved in this way then perhaps the

viewing perspective might have had an increased link to Nicoli's point of view, but the changes from unison, to following, leading, watching from a window, to close-ups, and to wide-shots, offer too many options to embrace a consistent point of view. Besides, with contemporary viewers increasingly familiar with acts of filmmaking, perhaps in no small part due to its accessibility through devices such as mobile phones, Metz's suggestion of the inevitability of camera presence may actually de-complicate the options for the viewer of films that do not comply with the conventions of mainstream film, with the 'filmmaking act' a ready option for the viewer's interpretation of camera identity. Mainstream films and television programmes increasingly reveal aspects of their making, bringing their means of production into the viewer's consciousness and perhaps strengthening Metz's argument. For example *Planet Earth 2* (Attenborough 2016. BBC) concludes each episode with a section that shows how part of the film was made, and the DVD versions of feature films often include additional sections that comment on the making of the film. For example as in all of the *Star Wars* films (George Lucas Rian Johnston, J.J. Abrams, Colin Trevorrow, Irvin Kershner, Richard Marquand, Dance Filoni   1977 – 2016).

This is not however to suggest that the 'filmmaking act' might have become the over-riding influence on the viewer's interpretation of camera identity in *To Be Watched While Eating an Orange*. The film is similar to all the afore-mentioned single-take screendances in that it provides information that suggests more than one possible camera point of view, which *may* include the filmmaking act. In spite of this ambiguity, *Six*, *To Be Watched While Eating an Orange, Say When*, and *Slip* in particular suggest, through the humanly possible camera movement and camera pathways, the option of human observation and therefore a possible character.

Six and *To Be Watched While Eating an Orange* are both directed and filmed by me, and as such the links to the dance community discussed in Chapter 2 exist on both sides of the lens. Additionally the mobile camera, in the act of filming, engages as both performer and maker of choreography. This is especially so with *To Be Watched While Eating an Orange* where only Nicoli and myself were present during the filming and the physicality of my camera operation exemplified the camera/dancer *pas de deux* discussed in the Chapter 4 and noted by Nicoli in her comment: 'You were in fact more of a dance partner than a camera man' (Nicoli 2016).

In my view, *To Be Watched While Eating an Orange* represents a genuine narrowing of the divide between camera and dancer, especially as the choreography of both camera and dancer were planned by both of us, as were all other aspects of pre-production. As a single-take film, the dancing filming event was informed by the knowledge that no cuts would be made in post-production and the spectator would see everything from when the camera was set to record to when it was set to stop. However, a separation of roles still unavoidably existed during filming simply due to the different requirements of the acts of filming and dancing. In spite of the desire to close the divide between the two of us through the production construct and the collaborative relationship between Nicoli and myself, we were still separated by our roles. Had we not taken the decision that Nicoli would not look at the lens during the filming, the viewer's perception of the dancer/camera relationship would have been different. Were we to have been dancing together as two dancers, without a camera, then it would seem quite reasonable that we would make eye contact, especially as the camera work is suggestive, as in the washroom scene, of a voyeur who wishes to avoid being seen and this is then followed by a 'face-to-face' dancer/camera perspective. If Nicoli had made eye contact with the camera however, then in the viewing experience the suggestion would have been of her looking at a person who accompanies her through her journey through the building. This person's visual identity could however only be guessed at however, because with the single-take film it is not normally possible to reveal a person whose point of view is being represented by the camera, as would be achievable in edited films by cutting from a person's point of view to the owner of the point of view.

For my final work of practice-based research for this thesis I made *The Glasshouse* (2016), The aim of the film was twofold. Firstly to devise a means of single-take production that revealed the physicality of a character, beyond the use of a reflective surface as in *Uma Toma,* whose point of view is expressed by the camera. Secondly to work in a manner that not only narrowed the divide between dancer and camera, but additionally bridged the gap between dancer and camera through creating interchangeable roles in the dancing filming event. In the following chapter I discuss some of the challenges presented by filming in this manner and analyse *The Glasshouse* from the perspective of both the performers and myself.

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CHAPTER 8. THE GLASSHOUSE

> Concerning some of the challenges facing single-take screendance production leading on to an analysis of my own film *The Glasshouse* (2016) in which I seek to create a shared production partnership between dancer and camera, and challenge the limitations of camera point of view explored in Chapter 7.

Single-take filming with a mobile camera brings with it a particular set of demands. The uninterrupted nature of the single-take film production parallels a 'live' performance, both from the viewer's perspective and as experienced by performer and camera operator. Once started, the performing/filming event is designed to run to the end. Porter notes how the recording of dance in long-takes shows the viewer that the dance has been executed with: 'no pauses, and no mistakes' (Porter 2009, p.37), an observation that aligns with Doan's proposal that the single-take: 'reflects the moving/happening world that we inhabit' (Doane 2004, p.262), in that there are no pauses, but not in the sense that there are no mistakes.

Filming with a hand-held or steadicam-mounted camera presents a challenge to the dancing/filming event in that the camera operator becomes a partner who must also perform from the start to the end of the work, operating the camera while physically engaging with the movement of the performers. Compared to a fixed camera, holding a camera in the hands, or even operating a steady-cam, increases the possibilities of mistakes. Keeping the camera level, moving whilst watching the viewfinder, adjusting focus and other operating requirements (especially if unassisted), and with a steadicam, dealing with the physical demands of camera weight, are all issues to attend to in the filming event. From the perspective of everyone involved in a single-take production, a mistake means stopping and starting again. The further into the take a mistake is made the more time is lost, the more energy expended, and probably the greater the cost. In addition, the longer the film, the greater the pressure becomes as the take goes on.

An example of this pressure can be found in the filming of *Russian Ark* (Alexander Sukurov 2002), the first full-length feature film to be shot in a single-take (Holden 2002). The ninety-six minute film, set in The State Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg, is an example of complex camera choreography interacting with performers. The perspective of the steadicam-mounted camera is that of a ghost who wanders through the building among real and fictional characters that are found in the corridors and rooms of the building. As he

enters each room of the palace, performers who represent the living do not acknowledge him (the camera) as if he is invisible to them, but others, who represent ghosts of the dead, do, supporting a consistent camera point of view that aligns with Branigan's 'actual spectator'. The film was four years in planning but cinematographer Tilman Büttner had no opportunity to practice the single-take as the building was made available for the filming for just a single day (Bradshaw 2003). He worked under the additional pressure of knowing that, quite apart from the organization of four orchestras, hundreds of actors, extras, and technicians, the unique digital hard drive made especially for the filming could only be used once, paralleling the experience of the dancer about to step on stage to perform in front of an audience knowing that he or she will not be able to stop and start again.

In an interview with Louis Menashe, Büttner reveals his choreographic relationship with performers noting how he 'danced with the dancers' during the ballroom scene that occurs towards the end of the film

> The dancers in the ballroom scene interacted beautifully with the camera and with our movements. You feel that only the camera alone was in the room with them. Sometimes the actors and extras had to improvise their movements and positions during shooting because of mistakes we made (Menashe 2010, p.122).

Figure 61. Camera moving among dancers in the ballroom scene of *Russian Arc* (Sokurov 2002).

Büttner goes on the say however that: 'After the ballroom scene when I "danced" with the dancers, I was very exhausted' (Menashe 2010, p.122), and recounts how there were moments during the filming when he thought he would be unable to continue and he had to rely on someone to physically support him through certain sections of the film. Büttner's accounts above imply a sense of performance in his role, but additionally the physical challenges that were present as he filmed. It is fair to assume that after the considerable preparation for the shoot, the knowledge that there would be no opportunity to do a second take would have put pressure on all of those involved, especially Büttner.

As with *Russian Arc,* particular challenges existed in the making of the single-take film *Victoria* (Sebastian Schipper 2015). Set in the streets of Berlin, *Victoria* was filmed in a single 138 minute shot that started at 4.30am and spans a period from darkness to daylight. Cinematographer Sturla Brandth Grovlen notes how: 'The film is shot with the camera in amongst the action, although not as if it is the point of view of a specific person. The camera is a fly on a wall, and an extra character' (Grovlen 2015).

The film was shot three times over three consecutive days, with, Schipper notes, the third take being the last one possible: 'This was the third and our last [take], we all knew it was our last chance. Shooting a film is very expensive' (Schipper 2015).

Although *Victoria* is a longer film than *Russian Arc,* the camera and its supporting cage and microphone used was far lighter. [1] Grovlen chose the camera and lens for it's manoeuvrability and, in contrast to Büttner's experience, did not regard the weight of the camera as major problem during the shoot: 'It was all shot handheld, without even the use of a body-mounted Steadicam, which would have been too bulky and ungainly to follow some of the action' (Grovlen 2015).

Mistakes were however made in the shoot but they are not obvious to the film viewer. Grovlen notes:

> These were small things like getting caught on the door. The microphone on the camera made a shadow that it hadn't on the previous take. There was an HMI light that was supposed to be turned on before we reached the next location, but the bulb went. There was also another location where the bulb went, and we had to change it with a less powerful bulb. But nobody notices except me! […] During a

chase scene, actor Laia Costa, who plays Victoria, forgot where she was supposed to drive and nearly cruised into the film's backstage production hub. Only Schipper, yelling at her from the boot of the car, stopped her ploughing through the fourth wall (Grovlen 2016).

Similarly in my own seventeen and a half minute film *To Be Watched While Eating an Orange* the first take was abandoned when, approximately half way through, a person unexpectedly entered the shot from a side door; in *The Glasshouse* a sudden change of light coming through the glass roof of the location caused the image in the camera viewfinder to 'flare' and the shot had to be stopped. Analogously, McMullan's *Slip* was shot thirteen times and she notes that none were perfect:

> In every take there was either a mistake in the choreography or there was a mistake in something technical. If it was a big enough, noticeable enough mistake, we'd cut the take just so we wouldn't sort of go through it. I think those were sort of the biggest challenges; the execution of the choreography and the technical side of things and the choreography coming together and just trying to limit as many mistakes in achieving what we want (McMullan 2016).

All of these single-take films were shot with a moving camera and all were subject to particular vulnerabilities through the need to film the full length of the film within time restrictions. With *Slip*, McMullan states: 'The pool was open until five, we could only get into the place after five, so we actually shot through the night. We wrapped at four a.m.' (McMullan 2016). Similarly, shooting of *The Glasshouse* in The University of Bristol's Botanical Garden started at 7.30am. The dancers and myself had just three hours to complete the shoot. Prior to the shoot we had no access to the location for rehearsal. Access was restricted to visiting to measure and plan where the choreography, both of the performers and the camera, would take place. The plan was illustrated in a series of drawings (figure 62), which were used to conduct rehearsals in a dance studio at Bath Spa University, where a map up of the location was made with lines of tape on the floor.
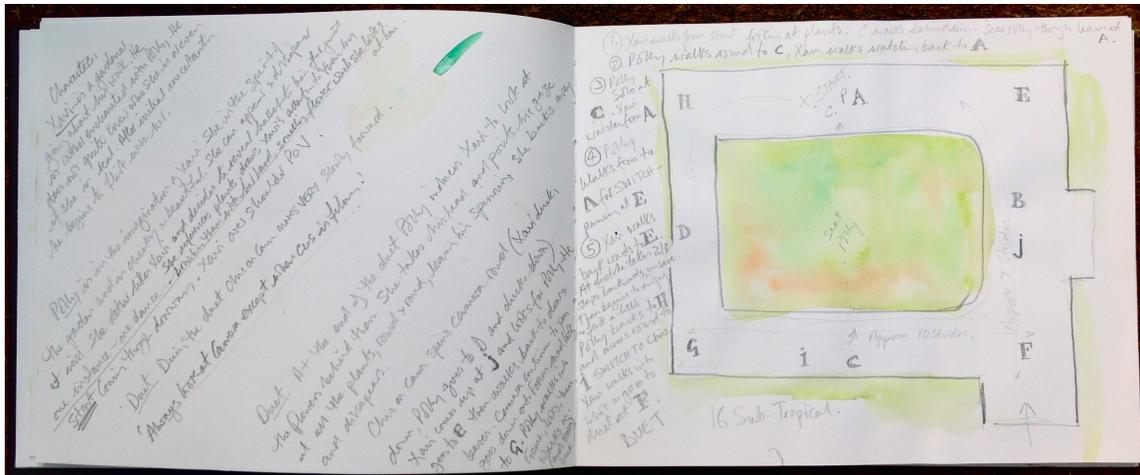
Figure 62. *The Glasshouse* (Lewis-Smith 2016)*. Planning example. Page from director's planning notebook.

As much planning as possible was done prior to the shoot in order to minimise the challenges of shooting the film in three hours. For example, camera settings were calculated to respond to the light expected at the time of shooting, and to provide a deep field of focus (see Chapter 7 footnote 2), camera travelling speed was calculated to match the choreography of the dancers, and plants in the glasshouse were photographed and measured to clarify their positioning in relation to the dancers.

The Glasshouse bought together some of the core aspects of this thesis as a means of manifesting and challenging some of its findings. As I remarked in the closing paragraphs of the last chapter, the construct of the film was calculated to address what I had not been able to find in the other single-take screendances. Primarily these are, the revelation of the physicality of a character proposed by the movements of a hand-held camera, and the creation of interchangeable roles in the dancing filming event to find out if doing this might negate the dancer/camera divide. In relation to my discussions that have been at the core of this thesis to this point I wished to:

1. Create a filming environment that minimises the divide between the dancer and the camera operator, as identified in Chapter 2 as being a default setting in screendance production.

2. To construct a dancing/filming event that corresponds to level 7 of my *Chart of Immersion*, where the camera operator improvises, and makes physical contact with the performers, as discussed in Chapter 4.

3. To invest the camera with a performer-like consciousness and to reveal the camera as a performer in the final screen work, as discussed in Chapters 5.

4. To use the moving camera in a manner that promotes a kinaesthetic transfer from the dancing/filming event to the screen viewer as discussed in Chapter 6.

5. To create a film that mimics a human experience, as discussed in Chapter 7.

6. To challenge the status of the single-take film as one that cannot reveal the physical identity of a character as represented by the camera, as discussed in Chapter 8.

The Glasshouse was a small-scale production that emerged, like the various screendance productions discussed in Chapter 2, from the dance community rather than the film industry. It involved myself taking the role of choreographer/director/camera operator, Polly Franks as choreographer/performer/camera operator, and Xavier Santos as choreographer/performer/camera operator. Challenging, the: 'Schism existing between the dancers […] and the crew', identified by McPherson (2014) in chapter 3, and the: 'Wall of separation' identified by Hunter (2014) also Chapter 3, the roles of the three main people involved in the production, Santos, Franks and myself, involved us being on both sides of the camera. The small lightweight camera used to shoot the film, a Sony PXW x70, was mounted in a Fig-Rig (figure 63) and was chosen because it was less unobtrusive in performance and had more manoeuvrability than for example the steadicam rig used to film *Six.* It also represented less of a physical barrier between camera operator and performer than does a steadicam and was transferrable from one person to another. During the shoot the camera was passed between the performers, and eventually myself, as a means of creating a dancing/filming event in which the performers switched from one role to another. This was accomplished, after practicing in a studio prior to filming, by drawing on the skills of contact improvisation. In order to switch the camera with minimal shaking, the performers made physical contact with one another, leaning into one another to engage with a shared centre of gravity while the camera was transferred smoothly from the grip of one to another. The Fig-Rig provided enough space on its 'wheel' for four hands to be holding it at one time as the transfer from one person to another took place.

Figure. 63. *The Glasshouse* (Lewis-Smith 2016). Sony PXW x70 camera housed in 'Fig-Rig'.

With this method, the transition between being a performer and a camera operator was not represented as an abrupt change. During the switch there was a point at which both Santos and Franks were engaged in both roles. Santos, commenting shortly after the film was shot, said:

> When we first started working in the studio I first felt that I had two roles. As a dancer when I was in front of the camera and as a camera operator when I was behind the camera, and I really couldn't feel the character when I was behind the camera. But today […] I could feel the character behind the camera, especially when I was recording Polly in that first moment. When I found her in the middle. When I first came to that moment it was 'oh, there's a girl there'. I really felt my character, but at the same time I was with the camera. (Santos 2016)

As part of my discussion in Chapter 3 I noted how Kember (1998, p.55) argues that the filmmaker is in a position of control over images, a privilege that is not normally afforded to those who appear in the camera viewfinder. In *The Glasshouse* Franks, echoing Santos,

felt that the roles had merged noting: 'I'd say […] I am being a filmmaker as well as a performer, I don't see it as two separate roles. For me it's part of the dance' (Franks 2016). The passing of the camera to each other during filming did not enable Franks or Santos to have control of the monitor images of their own selves, as described in the experiment *Lab 1* in Chapter 4, but did privilege them with the roles of both performer and filmmaker during the dancing filming event. In terms of bridging the divide between performer and camera operator, Franks and Santos had equal status as filmmaker/dancers through their defined roles in the production. In the filming experiments in Shacklock's *Beyond* project, also described in Chapter 4, I sought, but failed, to achieve Level of Immersion 7: 'Improvising freely with the performers. No control of camera other than turning it on and off. Camera held in hands as extension of the body. Basic consideration of filming direction. Auto focus on' (Appendix 6). The experience of Franks and Santos suggest that this level was close to being achieved in *The Glasshouse*. Though not improvising freely, as the choreography was largely set, they were both able to maintain a performance consciousness while filming. To help with this, they did not need to make adjustments to the camera settings, i.e. focus, aperture etc., as this was pre-set.   The camera was held in the hands as an extension of the body, but they did engage with slightly more than a 'basic consideration of filming direction' as viewing through the camera monitor was required to maintain composition and reduce tilting.

In *Edge Studio Improvisation* (2015), the dancers wore a body mounted Go-Pro camera, as described in Chapter 4*,* but they were unable to achieve the dual state that Franks and Santos did. *Edge Studio Improvisation* dancer Nadine Hope's said: 'It's either you are full on dancing and rolling about and just being that one thing, or you are trying to capture dance […] I would say it was very difficult to put yourself in both of those roles' (Hope 2015). Santos also noted this difficulty early on during the making rehearsals of *The Glasshouse,* and there is an implication that the process prior to filming may have helped the performers work with the camera as a partner in the work, absorbing it as an element of the performance rather than sensing it as an outside element. Santos said:

> At the end, when you have been repeating the choreography, you can get in that comfort zone when you can forget what are you doing next, and you are just enjoying it. I felt that with the camera. It was like a choreography, so when we start, taking the camera was part of the choreography so I wasn't thinking 'I have to pick

up the camera now', I was like looking at the flower and taking the camera (Santos 2016).

Though much larger than the Go-Pro used in *The Edge Improvisation,* the small lightweight nature of the camera used in *The Glasshouse*, and the means of transferring it from person to person whilst still filming, helped to minimise its obtrusiveness. Practicing with the camera before the shoot also engendered a sense of familiarity with it, bringing the apparatus into the choreography as a familiar element of rehearsals. The 'score' for the camerawork was that it should be held close to eye level, to create the looking perspective of the performer's actual heights. The round wheel of the Fig-Rig, with a monitor set just behind the camera meant that the performers were able to maintain visual contact through the monitor and through the upper section of the wheel with only the need to glance up and down l movement of the head (figuress 64 & 65).

Figure 64. *The Glasshouse* (Lewis-Smith 2016). Franks filming Santos.

Figure 65. *The Glasshouse* (Lewis-Smith 2016). Santos filming Franks.

The round shape of the Fig-Rig also bought with it an inclination for the camera to rotate while holding it, as identified in Chapter 4 as 'Dutching', a tendency that is countered when using a steadicam. To help each camera operator/dancer to keep the camera horizontal, a spirit level was mounted onto the Fig-Rig, but maintaining an eye on this had a tendency to displace the feeling, for the performers, of the characters that Santos and Franks were playing and they relied more on what they could see in the monitor. Subsequently, the camera-work tips, and is also jerky at times, much like the camera movement in *To Be Watched While Eating an Orange.* This is particularly evident at the start of the film as the composition includes the given verticals and horizontals of the glasshouse structure. As discussed in Chapter 5, our vestibular system is less able to make adjustments to tipping in our field of vision if viewing on a screen, and the viewer either becomes aware of the camera presence, as suggested by Metz (Metz 1975, p.39) and/or, as also discussed in the last chapter, presented with the possibility of a voyeuristic point of view.

In the first section of the film the camera follows Santos through a door into one of the rooms in the glasshouse. The camera, following him, looks over his shoulder proposing

that the viewing perspective is one of sharing Santos' experience. As Santos leans forward to examine a flower, the camera moves in closely to replicate what he sees. Santos, at this point taking the camera, moves on through the glasshouse directing the camera at the plants to mirror his experience as the gardener looking at them. This formula repeats throughout the film with movement of the camera suggesting the point of view as that of either Santos, or Franks, depending on who is holding the camera.

In Chapter 6 I use the example of Klevan's analysis of the camerawork in Fred Astaire and Cyd Charisse's duet in *The Band Wagon* (Vincente Minnelli 1953), where the camera is invested with a performer like consciousness as it leads Astaire and Charisse through the park. I used, as a second example, the way the camera in *Motion Control* (Anderson 2002) extends to the viewer the perspective of an intruder. Cowie articulates how, in *Motion Control*: 'the aim was to choreograph the camera so it was almost like another performer' (Cowie 2002). In *The Glasshouse* my intension was the same, with the eye-level hand-held camera allowing the viewer to see from the performer's perspective. Unlike *The Band Wagon* and *Motion Control,* the performers in *The Glasshouse* are both physically identified in the film before the camera takes on their point of view making it clear, for the viewer, just who's perspective the camera represents.

In the first and last section of the filming event the camera is operated by me as choreographer/director/camera operator. At these moments the point of view, with reference to Branigan's options as outlined in Chapter 8, is perhaps closest to that of an invisible observer (Branigan 2006, p.40). The rule in the dancing/filming event was that Franks and Santos would make continual eye contact with one another, via the camera, while dancing, but never to look at the camera whilst I was operating it. This simple formula supported the switch of viewpoints between that of the performers in their interaction with each other, and what I wanted to present as an invisible observer. Thus the points of view shift throughout the film, merging from that of invisible observer to Santos' as the camera takes on his 'looking', then changing again to Frank's as the camera is switched to her, and them back to the invisible observer at the conclusion of the film's narrative. As discussed in the previous chapter however, the 'filmmaking act' cannot be dismissed as a further point of view that the viewer may embrace.

In Chapter 7 I argue that the long-take, shot with a mobile camera, and shot from a perspective that mimics what is a humanly possible 'looking' perspective in terms of

camera positioning and travel, is an effective way to channel the sense of 'camera as performer' through to the screen spectator. For the duration of the shot the viewer shares the uninterrupted event that happened in front of the camera, with nothing added or removed. The single-take film, as discussed in Chapter 8, extends this concept to the entire film with the viewer able to experience exactly what the camera operator saw. In *The Glasshouse* the viewer is able to both do this and to experience the dancing event as one of the characters that they have seen, as visually revealed in the film. In this the film is different from the perspectives of the other single-take films examined in this thesis in which the physical identity suggested by a camera perspective is never revealed visually as a person, as this identity represents the eyes the screen viewer sees through and, as such, denies the screen viewer being able to see the 'self' that these eyes belong to. The exception to this, as identified in Chapter 8, is the film *Uma Toma* in which the camera operators are revealed through reflection. In *Uma Toma* however the reflection of the camera and the filmmakers reveals the function of filmmaking, as is suggested by the title, which translated into English means *One Take*. The people seen in the reflection are engaged in filmmaking, not characters in a narrative. The camera movement in *Uma Toma* is smooth and constant and is not choreographed in a manner that interacts with the performers. Thus, though the screen viewer may see the camera operators in *Uma Toma,* they are more seeing the mechanics of the filming event than looking through the eyes of a visually identified performer.

In addition to the factors already noted in this chapter that characterise the making, and watching, of *The Glasshouse*, a further factor was used to support this outcome. In Chapter 7 I discussed depth of focus in the context of giving the screen viewer choice as to what part of the composition on the screen before them they choose to look at, in keeping with 'real life' looking. I noted how Bazin observes: '…depth of focus brings the spectator into a relation with the image closer to that which he enjoys with reality. Therefore it is correct to say that, independently of the content of the image, its structure is more realistic' (Bazin 1967, p.35). The camera chosen for the project, a Sony PXW x70, records on a half frame sensor which allows for a greater depth of focus than a full frame senor. This, and the setting of the iris of the camera to a narrow aperture gained a depth of focus that minimised areas of the screen being out of focus.

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CONCLUSION

This research has examined a range of factors concerning the relationships between the dancer, the camera/camera operator, and the viewer of screendance. It has taken a historical overview of these relationships as a means of locating them in current practice within the broader picture of their evolution. The discussion has investigated different aspects of this relationship through primary and secondary sources and draws on the experiences and findings of dancers, filmmakers, academics and theorists.

The thesis represents a journey, central to which is my own practice as a screendance maker. I have situated this, my practice, within a framework built of the practices of other filmmakers and the discourses that are emerging in the area of screendance as it gains momentum as a field of study in academia to which this thesis aims to contribute (see Publications, p.8).

In the early chapters the discussion I posited a divide that exists between the dancer on one side of the camera, and the camera operator and director on the other. This divide reflects the fact that the dancer is the junior partner in a dancing/filming event while the filmmaker on the other side of the lens remain in a comparatively senior position in terms of decision-making. Screendance maker Katrina McPherson notes how she takes care to close the divide between dancer and filmmaker and put dancers at ease during the shooting of her films. My findings show this to be common with other screendance makers who, like McPherson, have links with the dance community. However, I find no cases of dancers trying to put the filmmakers at ease. Dancers dance for the camera; cameras do not film for the dancer (unless it be for their documentation). It could not be argued that filmmakers are more confident people than dancers, but dancers are the ones who are being watched, and being watched carries with it the possibility of being judged. If filmmakers are judged in this respect then it would not be when their films were being made, but they were being watched.

The thesis has presented findings that relate to dance in both mainstream cinema and in the experimental filmmaking practice to which screendance, in the context of this research, might be considered more related. I have identified a variety of different working practices in these fields and examined them alongside those of my own, both prior to starting this

research, and as a part of it. My evidence suggests that, even in the often small-scale productions of screendance making, in which filmmakers have strong connections to the dance community, the camera operator remains the dominant partner in that s/he chooses how the camera interacts with the dance, what it does and does not capture, and how the dancer will be viewed by the eventual screen viewer.

As a means of challenging this common status, I experimented with production environments that might re-negotiate the dancer/camera relationship. Initially I experimented by attempting to be both a filmmaker and performer at the same time in the *Beyond* project (appendix 5 & 6). This experiment, and the follow-up practice in *Edge Studio Improvisation,* identified that it was not just the physical need to manipulate a camera that made this cross-over problematic; the different quality of consciousness needed in each role also stood in the way of successfully inhabiting a duel position.

As a progression from this practice I created the experimental production environment in *Lab 1,* where the dancer was able to make decisions concerning how she might be seen by the camera. As in the *Beyond* project and *Edge Studio Improvisation,* the solo dancer found herself switching from improvising to making decisions on her dance based on what she looked like through the camera viewfinder. This project bought an increased sense of authorship to the dancer, as she was able to experiment with what she looked like on screen, but her consciousness switched between improvising and watching rather than inhabiting both worlds at once.

Both the *Beyond* project and especially *Lab 1,* produced film work that I would not normally have made had I been fully in control of what was captured through by the camera, indicating that an element of authorship had been taken from me as a filmmaker. This reflects Rauschenberg's observation that if enough control is taken from the artist's creative process then: 'maybe the picture will turn out to be more interesting as a result' (Rauschenberg 2004, p.107).

As a progression from the *Beyond* and *Lab 1,* I extended the research to include the viewer's experience of screendance, as a means of 'looking back' at different production environments and methods to explore they impacted on the spectator's perception of camera presence and its relationship to the dancer. As part of this I explored making films in single-takes as a means of allowing the dance to be screened without manipulating, through editing, what the dancer had done. These films were shot with either a steadicam

or a handheld camera, situations in which the camera, through its movement, became an additional performer in the dancing filming event, particularly those shot with a handheld camera.

As a part of locating single-take film works in the wider context of screendance, I generated a database of screendances average shot lengths. The database covers over one hundred films with a particular emphasis on the four-year periods 1993 to 1996 and 2013 to 2016, which formed the basis of a comparative analysis of screendance past and present. The database also reveals other information concerning for example whether performers make eye contact with the camera, whether the camera is fixed or moving, and how long the films are. This thesis draws on all of this information but the identification of average shot lengths was the primary data target of this part of this research. The findings show a marked shortening of shot lengths in screendances over the twenty-year period leading to 2016. The shortening shot length data does not suggest that screendance makers do not use long-takes, but reveals that increasingly few films are made that use them as part of their construct. Although the question of why this evolution has occurred is not central to this thesis, I have made some suggestions in response to it. Research for the database also revealed that there are very few screendances made as single-take films, and of the twelve that are identified, four are made by me, and five others, though they are strongly choreographic, might be also categorized as music videos. Screendance and music videos share common ground and I make an example of this in Chapter 6 (p.98). The finding that making films in a single-take is a little used style of screendance making is more central to this thesis.

In Chapter 8, I made the case for the single-take screendance, filmed with a mobile camera. I argued that it provided an ideal means of establishing a particular relationship between the dancer and the camera operator, in which the divide that I identified in Chapters 3 and 4 is narrowed. In production scenarios of this kind, both dancer and camera operator are responsible for choreography, both have an intensified responsibility to not make mistakes, and the resultant dance as captured on camera is left as it was performed. If the camera operator is sympathetic with, or is a part of, the dance community, this acts as a means of further narrowing the divide. The camera operator and dancer still have individual roles however, so I wished to further subvert this in *The Glasshouse.*

In this thesis have analysed my own films, and the films of other screendance makers, to explore how using the camera in different ways may suggest different points of view. One point of view denied by the single-take film is that of a seen character, as the camera cannot turn itself upon a physical character whose point of view it might represent. This was a key factor in the devising and filming of *The Glasshouse.* Where in *Beyond* and *Lab 1* the cross-overs between being a performer and being a camera operator were problematic, in the production of *The Glasshouse* the performers were able to occupy both roles at once by allowing the camera to become an extension of their character and points of view. This ability on the part of the performers was not something that was instantly present at the start of the project, but rather a skill learned through studio practice where the camera was always present and the performers became familiar with it as part of their personalities for the film narrative.

The Glasshouse represents an end point of this thesis, but it leaves questions unanswered and points the way to future possibilities. The feedback from dancers Franks and Santos indicates that it successfully formed a dancer/camera relationship that, during production, bought together the characteristics associated with being on both sides of the lens. There was a sense of co-authorship during rehearsals and shooting bringing with it a sense that, just as Deren commented on her creative relationship with Beatty in the filming of *A Study in Choreography for the Camera*, we were making the film together (Deren 2005, p.221). However, the initial idea for the work was my own, and although the film is a single-take I made colour adjustments in post-production and all of the sound was made by me and added afterwards. This arguably makes me the dominant author of the work. If Nicoli and I had switched the camera between us during filming, then *To Be Watched While Eating an Orange* might have been closer to a 'divide-less' project as we pre-planned everything together from the film's conception, and additionally co-consulted the musicians for the music that was added afterwards. However, at the time of its making in relation to this thesis, I was still exploring the divide between dancer and camera/camera operator and had not considered the option of camera switching as in *The Glasshouse*.

The production scenario that is represented by the films that I have made as part of this thesis is particular and at the same time limiting. This is because the research emphasis on the process has largely overridden emphasis on the end product. With *The Glasshouse* It might have been easier to produce work that looks the same to the screen spectator, better perhaps, by having a dedicated camera operator and assistant, and having the dancers

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move behind the camera and back into shot to produce the points of view that the film aspires to.

From the perspective of this research, *The Glasshouse* represents the experimental production scenario that the journey of this research has lead to, and I do not intend to de-value this by challenging its worth as a filmmaking device. Equally, neither do I wish to assume that the divide in the dancing/filming event that I have attempted to negate is a bad thing.

In relation to the dancer/camera divide that I have sought to challenge, to whatever degree each practical project narrowed this, I have always been the one who has instigated and steered the projects and thus the balance of authorship has still, for the most part, been weighted in my direction. It is after all my research and thus I have designed the projects as part of my practice for it. Perhaps ultimately a division of roles in this respect supports individuals to achieve most within them, and besides, if one were to aim for a total balance of authorship in any collaboration, how would it be possible to weigh each element of individual contribution against another. It would seem a futile exercise anyway, being more akin to some form of competition than the spirit of collaboration in which one individual's ideas spark off new ideas in another, and the division of tasks is based on whatever is needed to best achieve the objectives. *The Glasshouse* effectively bought together the six areas as outlined in Chapter 8 (p.126) that emerged as core concerns of this thesis, something that I have found in no other film. However, it remains questionable that the camera/dancer divide can ever be resolved in any screendance production without, perhaps, attention to every possible detail where a balance is to be struck between the roles of the two, a scenario that may not necessarily be the most productive way of working, and is unlikely to be recognised by the audience who watch the film.

Perhaps then greater control might be given to the screen spectator, allowing him or her to take the place of the camera operator. In practice, this presents a new challenge and could become a way of developing what my thesis has covered, seeking a more direct connection between dancer and screen spectator, one in which the viewer engages directly with the dancer in a *pas de deux* and makes decisions traditionally made by the camera operator. One way in which this is already developing is via virtual reality. Instead of the viewer engaging with a screen-based experience where what they see and hear is predetermined by others. They engage with dancers directly and are able to control their

own relationship with them. On a very simple level, filming dance with 360° video technology allows the viewer a level of control over the viewing experience that would otherwise be pre-determined by a camera operator. The 360° experience, on a smart phone, tablet or through VR goggles, is immersive to a point, but it lacks the possibility of interacting with dancers in the way a hand-held camera is able to do, moving in amongst them by choice rather than viewing from a fixed central place.

On-line games such as *Minecraft*, The *Roblox* series, *Zelda* (*Triforce Heroes* and *Spirit Tracks*), *Order and Chaos,* and *Warcraft* allow the player to interact with other players in other places. In these games however, the physicality that represents you, the player, is pre-set. Your identity is limited to the changing of clothes (skins) and weapons etc, and the range of movement is pre-determined and limited. Motion tracking, both through sensors reading movement in the open space in front of them, for example as used in the PlayStation technology, and through wearable sensors sending a wireless signal to a reciever, enables a mediated body to be more representative of one's own and introduces the possibility of dancers performing with others in virtual space. In such a scenario, viewing themselves on a screen while performing, the dancers may be offered the option to switch between first and third person viewing positions, as they dance, interacting with other dancers, creating a live edit as the dance takes place. A simple screen recording of the dance then becomes a re-playable screendance. In the case of a *pas de deux,* the re-play might be presented simultaneously on two separate screens, each one being the point of view of one of the dancers. The more dancers involved, the more screens would be needed to show each individual's perspective and role in the dance, or the viewer might have control over who's perspective they choose to view by switching from one to another. Wearable wireless sensor nodes are available that are little bigger than a 10 pence coin (Chou 2006, p.3), enabling a dancer not to be overly encumbered with weighty apparatus, leaving them free to move without too much restriction, and the development of computer home gaming technology, like the X Box Kinect, brings with it affordable technology that can be, and is being, requisitioned by the dance community, just as happened with the advent of video technology in the 1960s.

Although the above mentioned possibilities can be seen as linked to the research pathway represented by this thesis, the interactive immersive world offered by virtual reality, as a place for dance, is a rather different experience than that of the passive watching of pre-produced films via the convention of the single screen. At the start of this thesis I examined

a number of terms that describe the intersection of dance and film as a means to decide on the terminology that I would use. Dance makers and digital technicians, and those who are both, already use virtual worlds as performance spaces. They perhaps see their work less connected to screendance, and more connected to an exploratory world that is an intersection of dance and cyber technology rather than dance and filmmaking. Screendance makers have always embraced new technologies, as can be seen for example in *Wide Open Feat* (Nic & Dom 2015), but the work usually, at this point in time, remains a single screen, non-interactive viewing experience. However, the rapidly evolving nature of computer technology provides a fertile area for exploration by dance makers, contributing to the discourse surrounding the mediated dancing body, of which my filmmaking practice and research is a part.

The intersection of dance, and the evolving technology that I refer to above, is giving rise to a new field of performance. The London based collective 'body>data>space', and particularly Professor Joseph Hyde, one of the collective members, has initiated a number of projects in this area. Hyde was central to the project *Me and my Shadow* (2012) which used Microsoft Kinect controllers, as used with X Box home gaming technology, as a means of capturing human motion to create an personal recognisable avatar, projected live into a shared 'performance' space. The feeds were streamed across the Internet between performances spaces in London, Brussels, Istanbul, and Paris, enabling live interaction between performers in a common virtual space (figure 66).

Figure 66. Dancer Sasha Spasik performing with other dancers in the virtual world of *Me and my Shadow* (body>data>space 2012).

The work being done by Hyde, which involves dancers, resonates with some of the findings of this thesis concerning screendance in that technology brings together, and also separates, two distinct communities of expertise. The experience for the dancers in Hyde's work is immersive and interactive, but is still engaged with on screen. Is this then still screendance? Carroll proposes that: 'Definitions […] demarcate the boundary of a field from other fields' (Carroll 2001, p.47). However in the context of screendance, and surely other arts forms as well, the evolvement of technology creates new works which in turn destabilise the definitions with which we, as researchers and artists, use to locate and discuss our practices, demanding either subcategories to clarify specificities or willingness for a single term to embrace an expanding multiplicity of forms.

The evolvement of my own work remains, for the present at least, in the more traditional two dimensional, non-interactive, screen viewing space, but the duel perspective nature of on-line games as mentioned above allows for a development of *The Glasshouse*. My practice that follows on from this thesis is one that continues to explore the single-take screendance. Unlike *The Glasshouse* however*,* the dancing event will be filmed twice, once by each dancer. The two versions of the dance will be screened simultaneously side by side on two screens (or on a split screen), with each screen presenting a single dancer's

experience and viewpoint. Film storytelling through multiple perspectives is not new. *Rashomon* (Akira Kurosawa 1950) and *Vantage Point* (Pete Travis 2008) both present switching individual viewpoints, and *Timecode* (Mike Figgis 2000*)* splits the screen into quarters to show four single-take individual perspectives of the same event. The device would however, I believe, be new to screendance, and the making style of *The Glasshouse* would allow dancers to perform with handheld cameras to provoke a kinaesthetic experience for the viewer.

The point at which this thesis ends is then a threshold of new practice. Butterworth contends that the examination and articulation of creative practice, as the research represented by this thesis has been for me, leads the artist away from: 'Well-worn methods, personalised choreographic 'toolboxes' and personal institutions [and they] begin to employ other approaches and tools of investigation' (Butterworth 2009, p.160). In this sense my journey of inquiry that this thesis articulates does not end here, but is simply the end of one chapter that leads on to the next.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: page 161. FILMOGRAPHY: page 167.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER 1

(1) Cinedans is an annual international screendance festival held in The Netherlands. The Cinedans website promotes the festival as:

> Cinedans Dance on Screen Festival is unique in the Netherlands and in the world. The central focus of the festival is on dance film. Cinedans sees the ideal dance film as a true synthesis between the two media of dance and cinematography. At Cinedans the emphasis lies on choreographies created specifically for the camera and on special film adaptations of existing dance performances (http://cinedans.nl/en/foundation/ n.d.)

CHAPTER 2

(1) Skirt dances were a popular form of stage entertainment in Europe and America in the latter part of the 19th century. Originating in London, the dances involved the swirling and spinning of skirts made from many meters of fabric. Coloured theatre lights, an idea developed by skirt dancer Loie Fuller, often lighted the dances. The development of the dance form is credited to Kate Vaughan.

(2) The Industrial Revolution of the 19th century Britain bought with it an expansion of city population. Theatre entertainment was popular and a number of new theatres were built, while others like Covent Garden and Drury Lane were extended. Venues catered for a wide range of classes hosting everything from lectures to minstrel shows. Ingenious means were used to devise shows that responded to the Victorian fascination for the incredible and the supernatural. Shows featured acts like the Indian rope trick and escapologist acts like those of Harry Houdini (1874 -1926) whilst the developments in hydraulics and electric light enabled spectacular on-stage displays like a moving train and a burning paddle steamer.

(3) Magic Lantern shows may be seen as one of the precursors to motion pictures. A light source, concentrated by reflecting it off a concave mirror, was shone through a glass slide with an image printed or painted on it, resulting in a projection of the image onto a screen. Innovations in the latter part of the 20th century introduced two glass plates placed together with one moving against the other to create an animated image on screen.

(4) Early films such as Murnau's *Faust* 1926 went to great lengths to find creative ways of adding text to their films, such as including, in the composition of the frame, signs and labels that appeared incidental but were deliberately placed to support and enhance meaning and narrative.

(5) In 1982 Rob Rogers directed *Ballet Robotique*. (broadcast BBC2, 2/3/85) The film features mechanical robots, building cars at a General Motors plant, as its subject matter. It is set to Tchaikovsky's *Waltz of the Flowers*, a section of the *Nutcracker Suite*. The graceful and highly articulate movement of the robotic

limbs are choreographed through the edit to synchronise with the music. Its relationship to ballet is further emphasised by the use of double and multiple screens that correlate to duets and the multiple dancers of the corps de ballet moving together and in canon. In addition, the four sections of the film are entitled Études, Pas de Deux, Divertissément, and Finale.

(6) Earlier Hollywood dance films presented acting and dancing as equal story telling currency. For example when Fred Astaire walks through the park with Cyd Charisse in *The Band Wagon* (Vincente Minnelli 1953) he suddenly does a double step and begins to dance, merging the pedestrian and dance movement seamlessly together, inviting the viewer to accept the transfer from the 'normal' movement world associated with the place and event, to the magical one of dancing. This style of filmmaking has recently reappeared in mainstream cinema, for example in *Mamma Mia* (Phyllida Lloyd 2008) and *La La Land* (Damian Chazelle 2016)

(7) Nelli Heinomen filmed a number of dance performances in the 1970s. He reflects that:
> The most revolutionary technical thing that happened in the video field [pre 1980] was the emergence of portable recording equipment and the development of "low light" cameras, leading to the "one man" video crew. By using half-inch reel –to-reel black-and-white video equipment, one person could function as director, camera-person, technical engineer, and audio engineer…. People ask why we didn't start videotaping before that. We couldn't because film, which was all that was available, required tons of light, the reels were too short, and you needed a big crew. (Heinomen 2003, p119).

(8) Examples of these festivals include: Loikka Dance Film Festival (Finland), Cinedanse montreal (Canada), Dance Camera West (USA), International Dance and Electronic Media Festival (Mexico), Movies by Movers (USA), Reel Dance (Australia), Sao Carlos Vodeodance Festival (Brazil), Dance Screen (Austria), Festival Videodanzaba (Argentina), Jumping Frames (Hong Kong), DMJ International Video Dance Festival (Japan), Kino Tanca (Poland), Dance Camera Istanbul (Turkey).

(9) A British Council, Arts Council of England, and South East Dance co-produced triple DVD series *Forward Motion* (2008) featuring 'leading British screendances' from the late 1980s to 2007. Of the twenty-two screendance works, eleven are made by director/choreographers.

REFERENCE

Heinomen, N (2003). In: Zimmer, E Optic Nerve: Busby Berkeley and the American Cinema. In: J. Mitoma, ed., *Envisioning Dance on Film and Video*, New York. Routledge.

CHAPTER 3

(1) Support Journeys

For this task, performers were asked to recall a time when they felt supported. Individually, and one at a time in no particular order, they spoke of their experiences whilst taking a physical journey through space. With their

bodies, all other performers supported this person's movement, helping them to make the journey. Performers gave their weight freely to those supporting them, allowing themselves to be moved using a minimum of their own effort.

Initially I took the role of operating the camera with one hand and used my other hand/arm to join in the support for whoever was narrating/moving. This positioned me half in and half out of the improvisation. This was awkward as the camera got in the way of the other performers, and myself, and I quickly became aware that my physical presence was restricting the possibilities of the improvisation. After several minutes I withdrew to Immersion 5, allowing my camera consciousness to predominate instead of half being in the improvisation.

(2) As an extension of Practice 1

My role in Shacklock's Beyond project, when working at Chart of Immersion level 7, may be seen as mirrored in video games such as *Minecraft* (Mojang) and *Call of Duty* (Activision). In these games the player has control of the camera viewpoint *and* the avatar, or performer, that represents themselves, making them the equivalent of a consciousness merger between camera operator and performer. Usually the default screen viewpoint in these games is that of the avatar's, with hands, weapons, or tools being visible as one might see one's own hands and arms in front of you. The viewer, or gamer, experiences an unbroken real-time screen event aligning the sensations of the game action with that of real life. Camera operator and avatar are in effect the same, a pas de deux within one's own consciousness, the consciousness I sought to inhabit as performer/camera operator in the Beyond project.

(3) Image composition from GoPro

The film that resulted from Chart of Immersion levels 7 and 8 in The Edge Studio Improvisation had similar qualities as figure 7 in which the camera operator's limbs are in shot. In addition the horizon tilts as illustrated in figures 67 & 68. The effect, in the viewing of film, is a tilted horizon, which is discussed further in Chapter 5.
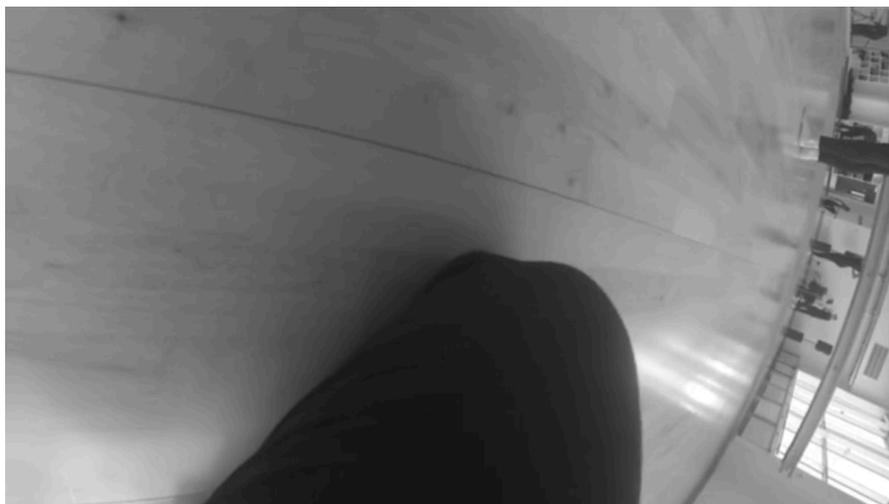
Figure 67. Still from Edge Studio Improvisation (Lewis-Smith 2015) showing camera operator limbs and tilted horizon.

Figure 68. Still from Edge Studio Improvisation (Lewis-Smith 2015) showing camera operator limbs and tilted horizon.

(4). As an offshoot of this thesis, *Lab 1* has been developed into a teaching device designed for Higher Education students learning screendance making. The device, called a *Looking Box*, supports awareness of composition and how the body is framed, through practical 'looking' explorations. The practice of using these devices has been trailed at Bath Spa University, Roger Williams University, and Mills College California. The documented practice was disseminated at Duke University, North Carolina in October 2015 at The Symposium of Screendance Teaching, which was a part the American Dance Festival. Appendix 14 provides a summary of the design and application of the Looking Boxes in teaching forms.

CHAPTER 4

(1). It may possibly have included 'zooming'. Early zoom lenses were invented in the 1920s by Joseph Walker for Paramount).

(2). Times film critic Kenneth Turan records Berkeley as saying: "I only used one camera; I didn't need any more than that" (Turan 2008). With repeated single camera takes Berkeley's dancers would have had to perform his choreography exactly the same each time.

Turan, K (2008) Busby Berkeley's Dance Numbers are Still Eye Popping. Los Angeles Times [online]. Available at: http://articles.latimes.com/2008/aug/01/entertainment/et-busby1. (Accessed 20th December 2016)

(3) Full length Feature film *Tangerine*, director Sean Baker (2015) was shot on an I phone 5s. The film was screened at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival. The film was voted 14th best film of the 2015 in Sight and Sound annual critics poll.

(4**).** Fred Astaire was an early advocate of long-takes and his insistence that his dances were filmed in a manner that included the full body and were edited as little as possible leaves a clear and unambiguous record of his screen choreography. For example his duet with Ginger *Roger Smoke Gets in your Eyes* (Roberta 1935) starts with an unbroken take of over two minutes.

(5). This long-take differs only slightly from *Annabelle's Serpentine Dance* in that the camera pans from side to side to follow the dancers. The viewing position is the same, that of the audience perspective in the 1933 Broadway musical of the same name upon which the film is based. This viewpoint associates itself with the 'from a distance' perspective of a conventional theatre audience, separated from the stage by a visible (edge of stage) or invisible line that denotes the end of the audience area and the start of the performance area. With this distance between performers and viewers there is little kinaesthetic empathy in the viewing experience of the film, and the performer/ camera relationship is similarly one in which there is no choreographic relationship as described in the *pas de deux* in Chapters 4 and 5. This is in sharp contrast to Berkeley's camera choreography as described in Chapter 4 and illustrated in figures 30 to 33. Here the viewer is taken on stage with the dancers, in amongst them, moving through them in a manner that could easily be the perspective of another dancer. Berkeley's shot lengths, though long compared to contemporary screendance making, are far shorter however than Astaire's. In this sense neither achieve the effect that a combination of the two is able to do. http://articles.latimes.com/2008/aug/01/entertainment/et-busby1

CHAPTER 5

(1). The term Dutching makes reference to the flat landscape of Holland as a place where the horizon is usually exactly horizontal and any camera tilting would be highly noticeable.

CHAPTER 6

(1). According to the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and The British Film Institute a film lasting over 40 minutes is classified as a Feature Film. Feature length screendance works from Wim Vandekeybus include*: La Mentira* (1992) – 49'44''. *In Spite of wishing and Wanting* (2002) – 50'45'' and *Blush* 2005 52'45''. Feature length screendance works by Thierry de Mey include *Rosas Danst Rosas* (1997) 57'and *Fase* (2002) 52'52''.

(2). Non-mainstream productions such as trailers and news reports, which are included in the Cinemetrics database, have been disregarded. The twenty-one films were selected as recognisable mainstream cinema productions).

(3). Examples of music video as screendance:

Chris Cunningham *All is Full of love* (1999) published by Universal Music Publishing Ltd/Famous Music. Available at: https://vimeo.com/43444347 (Accessed 2nd February 2017). This film echoes choreographic

qualities found in Fernand Leger's film *Ballet Mechanique* (1924). Available at
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AjI2J2SQ528 (Accessed: 23/12/15).

Keren Chernizon's official music video for Elen *Sink Like a Stone*. (2015) Published by: Projeto SOLO
Available: https://vimeo.com/groups/screendancecollective/videos/117267784 (Accessed: 23rd December
2017).

Lorn official music video. Codirected: Pavel Brenner, Julian Flores, Sherif Alabede, *Acid Rain* (2014). [Single-
take].Published By Wednesday Sound.. UK MVA 'Best Dance Music Video' Winner. Available:
https://www.nowness.com/picks/lorn-acid-rain#! (Accessed: 3rd February 2017).

Christian Larson. *Valtari.* (2011). Music video for Sigur Ross. Produced by Noreen Khan. Available:
https://vimeo.com/53394874 (Accessed: 3rd February 2017).

Jason Jurgens. *Say When* (2013). [Single-take]. Music video for 'Generationals. Avaiable at:
https://youtu.be/VavNpZxAuL4 (Accessed: 23rd December 2015).

(4) Although full-length films are available via the internet at high definition resolution, making satisfactory watching on a computer or television screen, copyright may be a factor that dictates whether they are available. Full-length feature films, with multiple stakeholders, can be encased by complex copyright details, with production companies wishing to protect their product from non-box office or other commercial screenings. For example, films screened via Netflix and Now TV provide revenue for the producers and are therefore only available to subscribers. Screendance works are less likely to follow this trend as they do not represent popular viewing and are thus not channelled through the popular entertainment industry. To protect any revenue that may be forthcoming from DVD sales they may be withheld from on-line viewing. For example none of the collaborations between Cunningham and Atlas, and Cunningham and Elliott are available on-line. Screendance makers like Margaret Williams and Katrina McPherson also protect DVD sales of their work, and its exclusiveness to film festivals, by restricting on-line viewing.

The exclusiveness that restricted availability promotes also serves to protect a film's uniqueness and desirability. Walter Benjamin suggests that the reproducible nature of film, via multiple prints, threatens its value as Art (Benjamin 2009, p.236). Unlike the option of limited-editions offered by the physicality of art objects made by the like of print-making and sculpture, film presented on-line is downloadable and DVDs may be 'ripped' of their content, denying the possibility of value through scarcity. Balsom suggests that: 'Film and video art is now collected like painting, and central to this enterprise is the artificial imposition of scarcity effected by editioning' (Balsom 2013, p.99).

Others however put their work on-line, using the internet as a primary viewing platform. This includes award-winning films that are screened at festivals. Of the thirty-two screendance works itemised in Appendix 11, all of which have been screened, either in a cinema, on television, in a festival, or published via VHS/DVD, and or won an award, the majority are available to watch on-line. It is worth noting that many of the films in the

database are included because they were published on-line, making them accessible for the research in the first place.

(5). A further element that may be incorporated in screendance to enhance the *pas de trois* experience is smell. In 1955, North American film producer and entrepreneur Mike Todd, invented the concept of Cinerama, a wide screen film presentation concept designed to re-invigorate cinema in defence against the perceived threat of the increasingly popular television. As a part of this re-invigoration tactic, he proposed 'Smell-o-Vision', film with smells. Todd's idea was not to be realised by him, but by his son, Mike Todd Junior, in the film *Scent of Mystery* (1968) Cinerama Inc. Smell-o-Vision did not catch on in mainstream cinema but the idea remains as a novelty cinema sensation. The concept of additional sensations in cinema, beyond hearing and looking, has recently regained popularity through 3D cinema. In addition 4D, and even 5D experiences are to be found in theme and amusement park cinemas and in amusement arcades. These additional cinema sensations include smell, gusts of air, water, and artificial snow. In amusement arcades, the vibrating and tipping seats of a virtual car or motorcycle ride, and the enclosed environment of an aircraft flight simulator, work with the same intension, that of enhancing the experience of watching a 'film'.

The BBC used the idea of Smell-o-Vision through Opera North's *The Love of Three Oranges* (Quay Brothers 1994). The opera was broadcast as a Christmas special on BBC2. A scratch and sniff sheet was incorporated in the Radio Times that gave off the scent of oranges, bringing a further dimension to the viewing experience of the work.

The addition of sensation of smell has, I propose, the potential to further enhance the *pas de trois* cinema experience. At a screening of my own film *To be Watched While Eating an Orange* (2014), at Bath Spa University in 2015, all audience members were given an orange to eat during the seventeen minute film. Not only is the film a single take, mobile camera *pas de deux*, which for the most part has a deep field of focus, but oranges are present at almost all times on screen for the duration of the film. At one section, the dancer, Cathy Nicoli, peels and eats an orange (fig 69). During this event, the camera very slowly zooms in on her hands and face as she eats. The effect during the screening was that the small cinema filled with the aroma of oranges over the course of the film. As remarked on by audience member Michelle Elliot, Subject Leader for Dance at Bath Spa University: 'The thing I remember most about the orange was the smell. That still seems very vital in my memory (Elliott 2015).

Figure 69. Dancer Cathy Nicoli eats an orange in *To Be Watched While Eating an Orange* (Lewis-Smith 2014).

(6). The steadicam also brings with it restrictions. Moving quickly, particularly if the camera is heavy, is difficult compared to holding a camera by hand. This can be witnessed in the filming of sports, for example at the end of an athletic running event or football match steadicam operators can sometimes be seen running awkwardly to catch opportunistic shots as they move in amongst the athletes and players. In my own experience as a steadicam operator, following unpredictable fast movement as might be found in a dance improvisation is especially difficult when filming close to the action. A hand held camera, or one gyroscopically mounted in a hand-held frame, allows for faster movement.   With a steadicam it is difficult to change levels beyond the limits of the travel that the spring mechanisms on the apparatus allow.

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CHAPTER 7

(1). Marisa Hayes, Co-director of the Centre International de Video Dansa de Bourgogne, observes that a number of Screendance makers are experimenting with the GIF (Graphic Interchange Format), a means of composing looped motion, often seeming to have no starting or ending point. Hayes notes how: 'With movement as its Raison d'etre, the animated GIF resonates strongly with Noel Carroll's definition of the 'moving picture dance', a framework widely applied within the international Screendance community that tackles the

question of what we might understand as 'dance' in the growing field of screendance, or dance film'. (Hayes 2016, p.91).

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(2). Though the camera was handheld while I filmed, I used a technique of moving with bent knees and rolling the feet from heel to toe with each step in order to iron out some of the jerkiness associated with holding a camera and walking with heels landing first. In addition, pieces of foam rubber were placed on the floor in strategic places where the camera went so low as to touch the floor. The camera, landing and sliding on the foam blocks, was cushioned from the jarring that would have occurred when the camera touched the floor and was lifted from it, resulting in camera movement that is somewhere between that associated with a steadicam and the handheld camera.

CHAPTER 8

(1). Camera (Canon EOS C300), lens, battery, microphone and supporting cage used in Victoria weighed 5.4kg. The camera used to film The Russian Arc (Sony HDW-F900 (5.5kg) weighs, alone, the same as this rig but the steadicam used with it weighed in the region of 45kg.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Chris Lewis-Smith (CL-S) interview with France Hunter (FH)
17th November 2014 at Roger Williams University, Rhode Island, USA.

CL-S. You danced in *Hair*, but have you danced in front of the camera, for the camera, for other works?

FH: Other than for documentary purposes?

CL-S: Either.

FH: Well that I have but I have also danced in some television commercials. So, I did ten years of television commercials. Not a great number of them were dancing, but I have, there were probably three that were specifically, I was cast in a dancing role.

CL-S: Did you find then that working in front of the camera for television, television commercials, and working in front of the camera for a mainstream movie, i.e. Hair was a very different experience?

FH: Well for me it wasn't a very different experience. I think in front of the camera I was always aware of the permanence of the record. You know, dance is ephemeral so when you're dancing on stage. And I think the camera picks up detail that the human eye doesn't necessarily capture. So I was always aware of the specificity of what's required of dancing

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in front of the camera, or I told myself was required. So that was the piece of it for me. I always felt like there was a little bit more pressure to have every moment be clear.

CL-S: When you were working with *Hair*, specifically, would you, I think you have possibly almost answered this question, would you rehearse first and then the camera would come to you to film the work that had been made and rehearsed?

FH: We would always rehearse first, um, a lengthy rehearsal process, both in terms of creating the work and then refining it and then in costume and then a rough run for camera or several, and then changes that happen. The thing is that with film there's lots of time because of revisions and the number of people involved in it. Because there's sound elements, there's this massive crew of people. We shot in different ways and in different locations. We shot quite a bit of it in Central Park, and some of it in the night, some of it in the rain, at the fountain, we were at the granite staircase, through tunnels and things like that, which was interesting. We also shot at a sound stage in Queens, Astoria Queens, and then we took the cast, we were taken down to Washington DC and we performed one number on an outdoor stage and there were, I can't remember the number of people, but I think it was somewhere in the tens of thousands of live audience but we were also performing it for the camera. So I had never really performed outside before, it was between the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial so there was this vast open space. Plus I was aware that we were surrounded by audience and we were being shot from several angles by cameras. So that was probably the most startling experience because I didn't quite know where, it just felt like I was, I had no anchors anywhere, everything was everywhere. So, that was pretty amazing.

CL-S: When you rehearsed the work and then the camera arrived in any of the different filming situations that you have just mentioned. Did it change the way you danced?

FH: Well, I guess I would like think not, but I think I got used to it after a while. There were so make different takes of the same thing, we did one section over and over and over again and there wasn't a continuity of a beginning of a work to the end of the work. We had no idea what the placement of that particular section was going to be, within the film. And it

was a very different creative process because it was so truncated and, so, certainly there was more adrenalin when the camera was rolling, but I think after I got used to that I learned to just tried to be consistent and sort of not put everything in one take. Better to be steady and consistent in performance. So I think that's one thing. So on one hand there's an urgency to live performance, certainly, you only get one shot at it, but I was always aware that there was also more leeway in that than for film.

CL-S: When you were performing for the camera, or when you were performing in front of the camera I should say, did you feel that you were performing for the camera or for a future audience? Or didn't that come into your consciousness at all?

FH: You know we weren't shown any footage so we weren't allowed to see any, we didn't really have a sense of what the perspective was. Certainly in hind sight I realise there were close shots that wee being shot from far away and so um, it was better not knowing that sort of thing I think. But I was aware of the camera, and I said before, in a way it's almost like, it's almost like you're being observed, you know, very closely, that was always my feeling, and I felt like there was more at stake because of the permanence of the record and I needed to be my best self in every moment. So that was a little bit more pressure. But then once again, there's no creative control over what they choose or why they choose it, so um, you know and then they would ask you to come back for another take and ask for an emphasis somewhere or isolate an angle, a camera angle that we were aware of, shoot from way below or above or, you know, so um, I found it interesting, interesting not to have any control or any idea of what the outcome was going to be. So, that was a little, was kind of strange, because usually working with a choreographer you have a very clear idea of their perspective and concept and, certainly in proscenium you can tell what the audience is seeing. But with film its way more, on one hand it's very exciting because the possibilities are endless. As I said I was always aware of the permanence of the record. So that's a little bit more pressure than I ever felt dancing live.

CL-S: Did you feel that there was a 'them and us' situation on each side of the lens? You as dancer amongst dancers, choreographer, and then on the other side of the lens another world that was isolated from you?

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FH: Yes, definitely. We weren't in, the editing process is everything in film, it's everything it can take something and transform it into something completely different. And there was never any real communication behind the camera, of those people behind the camera, or even the director of the film, with the dancers, so all of the communication went between the director and cinematographer and the choreographer. And the choreographer would relay the communication to us, you know, in a modified way I'm sure. So yeah, it was, there was a huge wall of separation.

APPENDIX 2

Chris Lewis-Smith (CL-S) interview with Katrina McPherson (K McP). 19th September 2014. Skype.

CL-S. My PhD examines the relationship between the dancer, the camera operator and on to the viewer. I am exploring the idea that once the camera is bought out into a dancing event then the consciousness of the dancer changes completely. My investigations go pretty broadly at the moment and I'm half way through my PhD and I have got too much stuff at the moment. So I've spoken to Peter Anderson and Margaret Williams who I'm sure that you know and I've asked them more or less the same questions as yourself, and I'm looking to establish what kind of working relationship you have with the dancers that you work with. And one of the places I'm coming from is the idea that was proposed to me that the camera operator, stroke director, is predominantly in control of a filming event and the dancer is in second place in a way. That's not a judgement about whether it's right or wrong but it just tends to be the case, and I was wondering, my first question to you was, when you work with dancers, and particularly in *Sense8* and *The Time it Takes*, which would be a useful thing to focus on, because I'm sure you do different things at different times. In terms of decision-making, I'm wondering if you arrive on set and you know exactly what you want to do and you ask the dancers to fulfil that?

KMcP. Ok, well first of all it's a very good choice of films, by the way, of all the ones that we have made because they are almost at totally opposite ends in terms of approach. Sense 8 was made in 2001 and *The Time It Takes* we shot exactly two years ago. So I guess that's

eleven years in between isn't there. So for my self there has been quite an evolution in approaches between those two films. If I just talk about *Sense8* first and then maybe explain how *The Time it Takes* is different. In terms of what you just asked me. So, *Sense-8* was a collaboration with Katy Dymoke who was at that point artistic director of Touchdown Dance, and I had approached her because I had been the previous work that I had just made which is called Momentum, one of the questions that came out of it for me was around the sound, the use of sound. And I was interested, I got to the point where I was interested to have an idea of making a dance film that could be enjoyed by people who could see and hear, and people who had partial or no sight and only hearing. I was thinking about the relationship between the visual and the aural. So that led me in terms of research back to contact improvisation which I had been involved in as a dancer, and I was reading about Steve Paxton and his work with people with partial sight and blind dancers and the use of touch and so on. And that then led to Touchdown and to Katy. So I approached just saying I would be really interested making a film using contact improvisation as a starting point and this other sub-plot of the aural experience. So we started to work together and up until that point, I mean, I had already been working quite a lot with improvisation and always using it in a highly scored way. So I had evolved ways of working where I used scores, or sets of rules, in order to suggest certain ways for the camera to move and for the dancer. So obviously, my using scores in relation to dance movement is not a new idea, or was not a new idea, but I think using them in relation to camera, operator and camera, was quite novel, and then putting those two things together. So that was very much the approach we took with *Sense-8*. Now *Sense-8* was very much, you know, Katy and I working in close collaboration as co-directors of the film. And the way we divvied it up in the practice, or certainly in the credit, was she's credited as movement director and I'm as screen director. But the way it worked was that we worked together also with the dancers in a rehearsal studio and we looked at different scores for the cameras, for the camera, and for the dancers and kind of talked around and looked around ideas like, OK so if there's a score that's about peripheral movement in the dancer's bodies what kind of movement does the camera need to do, what kind of shots are we looking for that will enhance or speak to that way of moving? And then I would set scores for the camera operator. That's actually a film that I didn't shoot myself, I shot some bits of it myself, you can see me in it, but most of it was shot by Neville Kid who's a camera operator I worked with quite a lot with at the time. So I would give him very specific scores and the dancers would have scores. Jump in if you would like me to move in another direction.

CLS. All right.

KMcP. So that's very much how we worked. We had a few rehearsals with the dancers then some time in between the rehearsal and the shoot to kind of gather the scores together between Katy and myself. When we were filming we were very open with all the dancers about our approach. We discussed the different scores. You probably know some of the dancers. Some of them were very experienced like Scott and Gill and people like that. Some were less experienced so, you know, they were involved in and engaged in the conversation about how it was that we were going to work it. They weren't actually, the dancers weren't actually, saying, well I want to do over here, or I'm going to use this as my motivation. We very much gave them the scores. In terms of story-boarding. When I started making dance films I was in my early twenties, I used to story-board everything to the absolute minutiae. It was usually choreographer material, although I already used scores at that point. I tended to use them more in a Merce Cunningham style of chance procedures deciding which order the choreography and the camera shots would come in but not in the formation of the choreography and the way it was framed. So I would story board everything, but I had a sort of revelation in 1993 when I was in Canada and I was doing a three week residency with a young Canadian choreographer called Harold Rheaume and we were in Ottawa at La Place de la Dance Royale and we were making a dance film together in a particular location. Every morning before we started the proper shooting, which was all story boarded and choreographed, we would have a warm up improvisation where I would just set a score for the dancers, set a score for the camera, and they would improvise. By the end of the two weeks, the three weeks, of shooting we looked at the material and the stuff that really grabbed me and everyone else was the improvised material. It had energy, it had spontaneity, it had a sense of excitement, all things that I was interested in. So at that point I decided I'm going to move into improvisation. So *Sense-8* in a way, I mean Sense-8 is almost ten years after that period but it marks almost the end, and the epitome I would say, of working with scores in improvisation for me. It was the most scored dance film that I have made. It's probably the most layered, the most complex, in terms of its concept as regards the relationship of the camera, the camera operator, dancers. It's like onion rings. I don't know if you can pick that up when you watch it but there's many layers going on.

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CLS. Yes.

KMcP. But it was all planned beforehand. The only thing that wasn't planned was when camera and dancer come together, because obviously that's improvised. But as you'll know, I'm sure you've worked with scores, that's what you're trying to do, you're trying to... (phone rings in background). You can still hear me can't you?

CLS. Yes. I can.

KMcP. So, it was creating these structures that would allow the improvisation to come out of them. So that's how we worked there. Interestingly, amongst the dancers, I remember with *Sense-8* there was a little bit of, I wouldn't say unrest, but there was a little bit of unease, slightly. I remember at one point Scott Smith said; 'oh it's a little bit like being sampled'. And I think what he was meaning was that we were creating the situation, we were asking them to expose themselves in terms of creating movement in the moment, performing in the moment, but then we would take that material and do something with it. They weren't part of that process. And I've noticed that sometimes that can be an issue when you are using improvisation possibly even more then when it's a choreographed piece of material that you're filming. Because there is this sense obviously that the person moving in the moment is generating that material therefore they have more ownership of it in a sense, than they might feel they do in a choreographed moment. But what we've also found is that that kind of nervousness, or that kind of niggle about that in the dancers, is usually completely dispelled when they see the edited film. Because they then realise that the editing brings in a completely new layer of energy, which usually, I can't think of a piece where this hasn't, has actually enhanced the experience, the on-screen experience of watching that movement. So that's quite interesting to me. On the question of whether the dancers see what they are doing, whether we show them the material. I have always really been ambivalent about that because on the one hand having been a dancer myself and having kind of come through watching and working on other people's dance films as a young person, I always felt very very worried about what I felt was quite a schism exists between the dancers over there doing their thing, and the crew over here doing their thing.

It was always a concern to me because you would have the dancers, in their little costumes, standing out there in the lights and then you would have the crew in their sort of work clothes and their black jackets looking over there and people would be shouting across this divide and I always thought that isn't how I want to work. I don't work like that. So part of what might be you would think to say; 'come on dancers, come and watch, I'll show you the shots exactly we're going to do and then we'll go and do them'. Now the problem with doing that is you create, I think, you create a self-consciousness or too much intellectual consciousness in the dancer of their movement. So for me, in an improvised dance shoot, the dancer needs to be in the moment. And in the whole of their body in the moment. If I say to them, ok, we're just shooting your waist in this shot so don't worry about the rest of it, it will effect how they move, and I always think, is that what you are trying to do with the camera, you're trying to, you're homing in on a small part of a movement but you need to have the whole movement to have the correct intention. And there's that kind of strange thing between creating dance for the camera. You're not actually creating it for the frame, you're creating movement that is then captured in the frame. A very different energy I think. So I've been quite reticent to overly explain what we're actually doing. It becomes very different depending on who's shooting the film, because what I've noticed, increasingly over the last ten years, I've gone back to shooting all my work again myself. It's very different because what's actually happening when you're shooting somebody dancing, filming somebody dancing, is that they're interacting with you as a person, the person who has the camera in their hand, there not actually interacting with the camera they're interacting with you. So therefore I always feel that when I'm filming I can, just by my presence, affect what they are doing, and we have a relationship. In many ways that also kind of softens the tension between feeling, the dancer feeling, exposed or in any way violated by the camera. Do you see what I mean?

CL-S: Yes completely.

KMcP: Er, it's OK, because of the way that I relate to them. And that's something that's a little bit more difficult to do if you add a third person into the mix, which is the camera operator. But obviously very quickly they will start to have their own relationship as well, and that certainly happened in *Sense-8*, that Neville became part of the mix as it were. Yeah.

So maybe we should pause and see if we have got anything there. I can talk now about The Time It Takes in relation to that.

CL-S: OK. I think that given the time, and that was really interesting, and you keep saying things and I think, of course, that's just what I need to hear. I wonder if it would be good to move on to *Sense-8* now, and talk about...

KMcP: *The Time It Takes*.

CL-S: I mean *The Time It Takes*. The relationship between yourself, and I think you're operating camera there, you said, and Simon and the other dancers, and what that relationship was like. Are there are any scoring issues around that too?

KMcP: As I said, in a way they are opposite extremes. Because in the process of the ten years plus between the two films, I would say that my approach has completely changed, or evolved. So *The Time It Takes* is completely un-scored. The only score is the location, so it was entirely about asking particular dance artists to come and work with me in a particular location. And it was my, it was my intention, and it was totally carried out like that, that I wouldn't direct them in any way, and I wouldn't add any scores in. And that's kind of what we did. So the difference being for example in *Sense-8* we had a two day shoot. It was highly planned, it was rehearsed to the extent that you can rehearse an improvisation, put it that way. The Time It Takes was shot in a place in South Uist, the isle of South Uist in the Western Isles, in an area called the Machair, a space that exists between the sea and the beach, and the proper dry land. An expanse of sandy grassland, which is quite amazing and very unique to that part of the world. And in the summer it's completely covered with flowers. And it's always been very significant to the people who live in the Western Isles. And Simon, my husband, and our children, we spent a lot of time there and we got very interested in the whole atmosphere around that area. So the idea was to invite these three dance artists, all whom we knew and had worked with before, to come out and just spend ten days dancing and filming in that space. And as I say, I didn't want to add anything in, so I, what we did, basically, is every day we got in a minivan and drove to a different spot, I think it was about four or five different locations that we had thought, that's where we are

going to film, and we would just get out and we would start moving and filming. So literally I sometimes found myself, particularly in the first few days, with the dancers about half a mile down the road across the Machair and me thinking 'there's nothing for me to shoot !' Maybe I should have given them parameters! I kept thinking no, no, I don't want parameters, I want the parameters to be where we are and the experience we're having. It was almost kind of, I wanted it to be non-directing, anti-directing, it was about us becoming familiar with each other and having these creative experience in these spaces. Now all three dancers, I had worked with them all in different situations, but they hadn't worked together. And so there was a process of them getting to know each other and then somehow me being part of that. And that is really how the film came about. Again we discussed with them while we were shooting - did they want to see the rushes? I think in the first couple of days, I don't remember particularly Ros or Simon wanting to see anything. I think Dai Jan saw a little bit. Again I don't find that useful and I don't think he found that particularly useful. It was really about... I mean the reason that we can do this is that, for me it's that, having worked with scores for probably twenty years making dance films, I've completely internalised what a score gives me in relation to the movement. And I think for them as well in their own practice, well I know, is that they have on-going themes and ways of relating to space that they're working on, so we all bought that with us. So it's not like saying it's a complete free-for -all and we're just sort of arriving and kind of running around. It's kind of like were coming with all this in us. And the space and the relationship between us allowed, and the time actually, allowed us to see what emerged. I was very happy with the process. It wasn't easy because being a director, you know I've been a director for years and years and made documentaries etc, At the back of your mind you're always thinking, I'm actually in charge of this and I'm telling people what to do (laughs) but actually, the end result, I was so happy with because I think what you see on screen is a very honest and spontaneous performance. And it evolved between those people and I think that that's what you are actually seeing. It goes way beyond beautiful framing and nice movement, it is an actual experience you're witnessing, really, through the lens.

CL-S. I'm just going to go back to my questions in case I've missed anything out. I think, really, you have kind of answered them, and I suppose this is more of a discussion with direction rather than an absolute set of questions that need to be answered. I'd just like to ask you another question about the Time it Takes. When I watched it I was really interested by the way that you had chosen to cut bits of movement together. It jumps from location to

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location, to event to event, over time, and I couldn't quite place what I was, I found it really engaging to watch and I couldn't quite tell why. And it's almost as if you have some magic formula that you use that, and perhaps you do, makes you decide 'I'm going to put that moment in here because it has a particular energy and I want it to follow on from the bit that I put in there and, that's enough, I'm going to move on to here'. I was wondering why, how you arrive at some of those decisions. They may be very intuitive. I'm really interested in your creative editing process I suppose, why you chose to put those sections together in the way that you did. And then you cut back to what I suppose is a shot from a car going past peat cutting lines, and so you keep referencing this place, you keep referencing the traveling through the place, and then back to these events. Perhaps this is an unanswerable question, and it wasn't one that I was thinking about. It was only when I watched the film.

KMcP. I was going to say, I don't think you can really discuss the work without talking about the editing. Because that is such a key part of the process. The way that Simon and I work together, he edits and I shoot, that's how it cuts down the middle. But the way that that has evolved as a practice is, in the early days when I was making work I was, let's say, I was more inspired by music and choreographers like Lucinda Childs, the idea of repetition, looping, music by Steve Reich, you know that whole kind of thing, that was what inspired me. I've never been particularly able to engage in narrative. It's more a rhythm and poetry and texture I've been interested in. When I first worked with Simon Fildes in 1995 on a film called *Pace*, it was also the first film that I was able to have edited using a non linear digital system, which completely changed what we could do, because a up until that point I had been using a lot of repetition, lots of cuts, it was very laborious, you literally had to, on VHS, you had to copy and paste things and then go into an online etc etc, and suddenly you could do copy paste copy paste and looping and looping, so at that point I was able to start thinking about things structurally. You know, for example, having a sequence that was put together of eight shots and then repeating that sequence and loosing every third shot, and then repeating that sequence and loosing every third shot again, and the effect that would have. In Simon, my editor/ husband, I found somebody who was completely open to those ideas, and actually able to support me to take them further. That was the kernel of the way we worked, it hasn't changed in, whatever that is, twenty years. But it's evolved and I would say that when I'm filming I always, in my head, have this awareness of what the need is going to be in the edit suite. So that again is one of my key scores. So I'm all the time

thinking, not exactly 'ok this will cut with that and then we'll go to this and then well go to that', I mean I wouldn't be able to have that in my head with the amount of material that is generated in an improvisation, you could never be thinking like that, but I have a more instinctive feeling of gathering types of material, like sort of pulling in and creating a pallet. And then Simon, in the edit suite, begins to sort of, well I was going to say unpick it, but he actually talks about is as being more like a jigsaw puzzle, you know, that he finds a couple of pieces, that he thinks, 'ooh that kind of goes together, I like the way those two energies work. What happens if I go off on this and follow that through? So that's a little section, and then there might be another one that starts with another bit and how do they all piece together. Interestingly, when we talk about it, he talks about stories. In his head he's making up stories between these people, and I never make up stories, so it's quite interesting, because ultimately we're making the same film but were kind of coming at it in two slightly parallel ways. We used to sit together in the edit suite and go, 'oh yes this and that', but we don't need to do that anymore. That would be a complete waste of time for us to both be sitting there. What usually happens is that after the shoot I'll go through the rushes and choose the bits that I like or think work, although even if I haven't got time to do that it's not the end of the world because we'll have the same ideas about it. And then he'll start to piece together the work in the edit suite in that way.

And yeah, I just wanted to go back to the improvisation thing and that kind of relates to the editing as well. I think that the thing that's happened in the ten years between *Sense-8* and *The Time it Takes* is that I've had this whole period of working with Kirsty Simpson. And I think that for me that that definitely enabled me to step away from scoring, and to really explore this idea of being present in the moment and really in many ways kind of receiving what comes to you in that moment and acting on it. And the issue with the editing has often been that people say 'oh yeah yeah, it's all improvised except for your editing, that's not improvised'. Well it actually is improvised in a way, I mean the way that we discussed it, and was also the first day in with Simon, is that improvisation is about making choices, and that's what editing is as well. It's just that, you know, in improvisation that choice is made in the moment. And yet, in a funny sort of way isn't made in the moment. It's made in this kind of extended moment that goes back over the years that you've been working and developing your practice. It's the same with the editing in that Simon works very instinctively and intuitively in the moment, with editing. But it is informed by all the experience we've had of putting dance films together. In a particular way. It's not the way that everybody edits. So yeah, the editing is really really crucial and as I say, from the

dancer's point of view it can be the bit where they go 'oh' and then when they actually see it they kind of, I don't think they have ever not opened up to it and enjoyed what they've seen really. But what strikes me as well is that it might be really interesting to talk to one of the dancers. Simon or Ros, because this is only my perspective. You know if you are talking about the effect, the experience for the dancers, they're the ones that you should be asking in a way.

CL-S: Well it is a kind of triangulation really and I have been speaking to dancers, not with your films or Margaret's or Peter's, but other films. And then there's my point of view, as a filmmaker. And then there's your perspective. But I've just been speaking to Simon actually because I'm hoping that he will become the external examiner for this new university programme, and it looks like he's going to, so that's totally great, so I am kind of in touch with him and I hope I will have the chance to talk to him about it.

KMcP: I know that it's always about choices as to what you can fit in. I would imagine it was quite a different experience as *The Time it Takes* was quite a different experience from another kind of dance film being shot. And I'm not sure, you know, I know maybe more for Dai Jan because he had just come out of Tricia Brown Dance Company, so he was used to working in a very particular way. I think it was really difficult. I don't think it was particularly difficult for Simon and Ros, I think the living accommodation was a little bit tricky for Simon because we didn't have much space, we were there for two weeks. But I think that Ros and his maturity made it very easy to work in that way. For Dai Jan I think it was more of a struggle. And actually another sort of key part of it, maybe not totally relevant, obviously the other huge difference between those two works is the use of location because Sense-8 is in a dance studio, so it's an easier space to work in, and in terms of your aesthetic in the way that you read it as a viewer it kind of makes sense, and that's the challenge for *The Time it Takes.* It's out in the wilds, in the weather, and you can see in some of it the weather was very extreme. So that adds another layer of decision-making and of choreography, in a sense, is the weather, and the landscape, without doubt, I mean they're not dancing on sprung floors, that's for sure. You know, and Simon's wonderful solo in the peat. Actually it was quite tussocky, but it was quite soft so maybe for him it was not the worst space to dance in, but for me, every time he moved the camera, which was on a tripod most of the time for that particular bit, bounced up and down, even though I was

quite far away. All these things, it's just kind of interesting, add another layer of scores as it were. Defiantly the landscape and the weather.

CL-S: Well, I have chosen films, the two films of yours, and one of the reasons is because one's outside and one's inside and I've done the same for Peter and Margaret so that I have a breadth of possibilities of things that are happening.

APPENDIX 3

Chris Lewis-Smith (CL-S) interview with Margaret Williams (MJW)

27 March 2014. MJW studios. 5 Warner Street London

CL-S: Should I dive into this? I'm really happy to digress for this to be kind of, almost like a conversation with direction, but starting at this point because these are the things I spoke to Peter about and they relate to my research. First of all I wonder what two of your films that you feel the most different in the way they've been produced? It doesn't matter you might change your mind after I've gone, but roughly.

MJW: Produced?

CL-S: On set I mean, that you might make on set with the dancers, and not documentaries.

MJW: The thing is I suppose… the practice the Victoria Marks I have when we are approaching film is very similar. I think the films we've made are both different but…something very, two films that are very different…

CL-S: If you feel that there isn't a great deal of difference then that's fine because we can talk about your process as it is, not to get the contrast between the two.

MJW: I could, yeah, I could talk about *Wrists* which you probably haven't seen.

CL-S: No.

MJW: Which I made in 2009, in terms of different and I'll tell you why, and *Veterans*, I think that would be… that would be a good contrast because as you know, haven't spoken or haven't seen them visually dance and I tend to storyboard, I do like storyboarding and I have mostly storyboarded; all the productions I made with Vic and I did with *Veterans*. And I just find essential to do that if you're creating something that you know quite sure where it is going. Cause you never know where it's going. And the reason I chose Wrists, I made with a choreographer performer called Maria, you know whose part of the company *Mal Pelo*?

CL-S: I don't know.

MJW: Spanish, well, Catalan, they're based in Cataluña and I've known them for a long long time and we made a number of films which we see all together, Maria and I and Maria and Pep who is the other half of Mal Pelo. When I worked with them, I used to… I didn't use storyboard, I've just use my camera to just sort of use stuff and try things out. Anyway I was in Cataluña and Maria and I were going to do something. It was a day before us coming home and she said you want to come over to a farm? They live on a farm and they bought a studio, a fantastic studio a dance studio and… you want to come over, you know, maybe we can start talking about something… so I said yes sure, great, fine, see you in half an hour. We started to talking and then we had lunch and then we have wine and then I said: why don't we just show what we've just been saying because she said there's a place in the farm that they haven't refurbished and there's a beautiful wall that I loved and I said: oh wow I'll just take my camera. And we fitted the whole thing into that. She worked with John Burton and he does a lot of work with her and writes a lot with her and he recorded something for one of the performances a part of this so I used that in some of the music in some effects. Obviously it takes me long to edit and two hours to shoot but I think that the shortest time I've ever made something I would never thought in a million years, you know, I can do something that quickly and I really like it as a piece, I love it.

CL-S: How long is that?

MJW: 7 minutes I think.

CL-S: So, two hours to get 7 minutes. It's a lot of footage you must been happy to cut quite a lot of stuff you really liked you thought you worked.

MJW: It was just in such a… she likes this wall and I like the window, you know and it was between the wall and the window. Yeah, I mean, just in terms of talking about two different methods of approach to… I think, you know, I mean I can talk just as long as you want about it.

CL-S: Should I ask you these others questions? I don't know if they are all relevant.
One of my questions is how much was planned, actually we had a conversation before about this.

MJW: Well, we had lunch, well I always, yeah with Victoria Marks we always used to have planning in the evening, but anyway.

CL-S: Was she aware of what was being caught on the camera or was she more in her own dancing environment world with you in another space catching it?

MJW: Oh no, but then Vick and I had quite extraordinary relationship and collaboration.

CL-S: But she is not the dancer in this case, is she

MJW: With this Maria is just dancing so she just said well, I'll look when we finished. I didn't know that I had something and she is very open to all these ideas as work in progress because for her again is like you spend a lot of time developing and thinking so even If we haven't got anything at that instant she is still considering this as progress.
I consider herself a partner in this film because I really like collaborating, but she didn't come to have a look and I just sent to her an edit that I'd done. I think she was pleased with it. Because it's a working progress I sort of respect it that, you know I kept it in this little DVD collection. [points to DVD collection] It's not something that I sent her to.

CL-S: Do you have a camera with you in your car or something?

MJW: I always take my camera because it's quite nice to be able to just get it out, you know.

CL-S: One of my questions is about sticking to the script, or the plan, but in this case, it sounds like some inspirational moments happened during the filming.

MJW: Yeah, you know but just talking again, you know about the film here. I found this, and particularly working with Victoria Marks. We do some talking and I like trying things out; I mean I'm not a great talker but in this situation with Victoria I'm really quite happy to develop just as things happen. But what I was going to say, in nearly all the films are made with Vic, we go through to the process where prior to filmed rehearsals I make a storyboard and then we make the finished film. And I think in every single instant I used something from the rehearsals. Anyway, this happened when we made the film *Men*, have you seen the film Men?

CL-S: No.

MJW: Ok, we worked with seven men in their seventies in Canada, in the mountains. I'd got them to wear the same clothes in rehearsals; I mean, you know, seven men in their seventies, they didn't have huge wardrobes but you're not going to put them in costume. But they were a number of things that I used in rehearsals because when we got to the location it just wasn't worse or better, it had a different intensity, which was a experience from the formal setting. I was shocked because it only took two hours to film except, on top of what we did in two hours you are editing so, you know, it's in the editing that we made it.

CL-S: When you filmed *Men*, in the rehearsals period, did you think that the men had a different attitude when they were in front of the camera than in a rehearsal?

MJW: That is highly unlikely.

CL-S: You know what I mean?

MJW: Yes, I do know.

CL-S: Do you know Douglas Rosenberg?

MJW: I don't know if I've met him. I think he knows Vic.

CL-S: He probably does, he makes dance films and I think he sometimes goes to the Buenos Aires Dance Film Festival. He wrote something like: At an event where a camera is present, the event that would have occurred if it was not there has no chance of happening. Do you think that the presence of the camera in your filming events is like this?

MJW: No, I don't. I think it's the spontaneity that we're talking about particularly with people, I mean, Vick is so amazing and what I love about her is how she can make people actually be present and that is something that she has this incredible skill to do and she works like me. You know, that's why I think is so important to have a camera in rehearsal. And I found even, you know, before I started to make dance films, if you're doing a interview with someone they forget about the camera. I think the reason people forget about the camera is because there are interested in the person who they are talking to, so if you are a good interviewer they forget about the camera. If you're not very good they don't. And that is also to do with presence, but I also see that If you are interviewing someone and you're finding something about them, or when people are interviewing on the radio and they do this everyday they can be relaxed because it's what they know about. So, I do think, when you get the camera out not to make such a big deal about it. It's how you behave with the people that you want to work with that matters and we have to be extremely careful, particularly, everybody that Vic and I work with, everyone I work with on any film I very respectful if they're performing in front of the camera. I made them feel as comfortable as I can.

CL-S: I believe that when cameras first arrived on the scene, for performers there was quite a strong feeling, in the theatre profession, that the camera was a terrible thing that would take your audience away. It was going to ruin theatre, nothing was going to be the same again and there was a real suspicion around it. I sense now that people are so familiar with it because we all can carry cameras in our pockets and we can take photographs and video and then put online almost instantaneously. Everybody in the world can see them, it is so much apart of the culture we are a part of.

MJW: Well, I'm not but I think the majority people are, I mean I do think it has changed.

CL-S: Can I ask you a bit about *Veterans* then in terms of the different between the work that you did with Maria. It sounds like it was perhaps much more planned, a much more planned approach and one that I assume that you directed.

MJW: Well, I co-directed with Vic.

CL-S: Ok, and how much was pre planned, was it storyboarded?

MJW: No, when we had the idea, Vic had the idea to work with soldiers, in fact it was originally called *Soldiers*, the film, and then, we discovered that there's a sort of hospital in Los Angeles that looks after soldiers that have post-traumatic stress disorder and we asked them if there was anybody that would like to work with us on a dance film. You have to realise that to get men in their 70s to work in a dance film, I mean you have quite a lot of work to do in persuading people. With *Mothers and Daughters* there were two particular dancers, I mean I love that, I love the fact that we just working with people, you know, who want to be in there really. Anyway, It was quite difficult to find the guys and we had sort of, not auditions, but we set up some space, nothing to do with filming, but just to sort of allow interaction and movement and to see how they work and if they were in anyway interested. And that process, to get to that process, took ages, and to find people, and I think there was one who was very violent and unfortunately he didn't stay the count and he was physically not very nice. I mean It was quite sad and I felt and the guys were obviously not well, so it took quite a while for them to feel comfortable with us and in the end when we did start talking about filming and starting to develop ideas they became extremely positively and very much receptive to it. The preparation before I started to do anything about the storyboard was quite long and it was because we had some development money we were able to do this, otherwise you know we couldn't have done it. At that time Iraq was really very much in American control, I did a lot of research into that whole thing so then I applied to an organisation in New York who give money for dance projects like this, to get a very small amount from them to make the film so we could actually pay the guys and it was only when we got that money that I did the storyboard and starting to developing ideas and thinking about we could do. The storyboard wasn't that complicated to do. I normally make it because I just want to know what sequence is going go where, you know, which way I'm

going to go through the film and when we're going to start. I did quite a lot because I didn't quite know what I was going do with it, because we just had an idea.

CL-S: Did they have suggestions like we could do this or that? Or were they following your plan?

MJW: Performers will come out with ideas, I mean, all the people that we worked with come out with ideas. You want to share, you know, you don't want them to feel, you are going to do this and you're going to do this… It's very much a collaboration.

CL-S: Did they do anything like that?

MJW: I did not take over especially for them but you know, you're always in the situation when you're short of time. We were filming in the street in Santa Monica, you cannot use the streets in Santa Monica but we wanted to, I wanted to and also on the beach. We just finished filming on the beach we had had had enough. So that, you know, the wonderful sort of setting in the studio, you arrive and set up and film something and then come a have a look at what you have done. That tends not to happen when you're, you know, working in situation where the police are coming.

APPENDIX 4

E mail correspondence between CL-S and Cathy Nicoli. Concerning the film project: *To Be Watched While Eating an Orange* (2014).

From: Chris Lewis-Smith [c.lewis-smith@bathspa.ac.uk]

Sent: Tuesday, November 18, 2014 9:54 am.

To: Nicoli, Cathy. Associate Lecturer, Roger Williams University, Rhode Island, USA.

Subject: Re: Cutler Mill No.3

My questions:

Did the camera presence influence your performance? If so how?

Did the camera/my presence feel like a partner in the your performance?

Who did you feel you were performing for?

From: "Nicoli, Cathy" <cnicoli@rwu.edu>

Date: 18 November 2014 16:50:17 GMT

To: Chris Lewis-Smith <c.lewis-smith@bathspa.ac.uk>

Subject: RE: Cutler Mill No.3

I don't feel like I "changed" anything too large as a dancer while being taped, but there is something that goes on for me that is akin to seeing myself outside of myself - if only in my imagination. For example, I for sure used the camera as the "observer" and I tried to clarify what was being observed and to give an "unmuted" image (fingers not covering too much of the skin, come into the frame quickly here, establish your presence and sense of weight before shifting your stance, do not look at the camera directly because if you do your expression will change, hurry up, this is where the camera is moving like a train toward you….are some of the subtext thoughts I remember).

I don't feel like I had to start "showing off" my chops and technique though. I tried to keep connected to the motivation which made ME curious, and did not feel like I had to prove something to it, which was nice.

Thirdly, the partnership…I definitely feel like it was a partnership - in varying concentrations. For example, Room 204 felt less like that while I was dancing, with the orange as my partner, but when we got to the window and I allowed its own weight to skim down the window and wall I felt the camera as a partner as well. I'm not sure if it was the proximity only - I feel it was something about me watching the orange, which gave it the focus rather than asking it to focus on me as a dancer, that also shifted the camera back to a partner, from an outside observer.

I certainly felt the presence of the camera while running - it had your feet and my gate, this was fun.

I did not feel like the camera was my partner during the last track down the stairs and on to the "crumb path." I felt it was my competitor - whom I was racing for time. Then it shifted to the outside observer, AND THEN at the end I felt it leave toward the sky.

Fourthly, Hmmm…who was I performing for? The camera, the oranges, and myself in that order of importance.

APPENDIX 5

Examples of Beyond Tasks as set by Dr Karla Shacklock (Practice 2)

Location: Disused pub in Bristol UK.

Task 1. 13th March 2012

Blindfold Beyond

The first task that Karla set her performers was an introduction to the performance venue. The location had been kept secret from us. We were blindfolded and led down an alleyway, into the building, and then left to explore it for over approximately 1 hour. I recorded my experience on a small stills camera. This task interestingly took away any possibility of making image capture decisions other than randomly photographing what I could not see. They were presented as a slideshow in the order in which they were taken and I have chosen to bind them together with music. This chance production removed the editorial filter at the point of capturing and it would be unlikely that I would choose these images were I to have been able to see. It may be noted that the random nature of the images and the relationship between each frame, creates in itself an unpredictable visual journey that has a particular identity that hints at the textures of the environment and it's spaces, and the evidence of blindfolded people, hints at an event. The random, sometimes blurred, images can explained by the suggestion that the camera was operated by a blindfolded person, allowing the viewer to share a documentary in which editorial decisions were absent in the capturing.

Blindfold Beyond. Available at: *Support Journeys.* Available at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PhpiZXyIB_I&feature=youtu.be

Task 2. 14th March 2012

Pushing performers beyond normal limits.

Shacklock asks one of the performers to repeat a short verbal phrase over and over again without loosing clarity or meaning. A second performer must not let them slack from the task and must relentlessly drive them to keep going beyond the threshold what would normally be considered possible. The third performer simultaneously plays a piano to *accompany the task whilst pushing himself beyond his normal limits by repeating a phrase over and over again.*

I decided to move in amongst the performers with the camera and to attempt to take my consciousness, through the lens, away as much as I could from Kember's 'discriminatory gaze (Kember 1998, p.55. See Chapter 2, page 40), and to allow the images to come to the camera more by chance by releasing some of the controlled image seeking. I allowed the camera to have fixed focus, rather than it discriminating on that which it encounters through the lens, and I adjusted the frame rate to 6 per second to reduce the number of images to about 10% of what I would normally shoot at to capture movement. This allowed more light into the camera and also bought the film closer to Blindfold Beyond as a set of still images.

The issue of compromise in this situation was between the degree of control I would allow myself in aiming the camera and in engaging with the performers as they undertook the task. No control at all might be to place the camera in one part of the space and let it capture whatever passed across the field of the lens' vision. Full control would be to seek out the images, zoom, focus, move the camera, decide on duration of each shot etc. As a filmmaker I am aiming to create an end product that will be screened. I found it difficult to divorce myself from an aim to construct imagery and sound that drew on this project in its making process in a way that I thought would engage a viewer. In found myself attempting to hover between control and no control, or at least very little control. I tried to strike a deal between myself as a filmmaker, who creates patterns of light on a screen that have a design aesthetic in movement/time and space, who captures and edits for a definable rhythm/energy/contrast/and coherence, based on my own creative approach to design – and a 'hands off/mind off' approach that allows chance to dictate everything that is captured. The question that was crucially important at this point was whether I was able to work at the edge of control, taking advantage of material that arose that I may never have consciously arrived at by being fully in control and yet responding to the evolving performance by pointing the camera at parts of the action that I sense had potential.

Unlike tasks that were to come, I was not myself responding to any of the task 'rules'. I was a hunter seeing if my camera could shoot the silver bullet that always finds its prey. But with my eye part removed from the 'sights', relinquishing responsibility for the aim, I was more aware of the whole event. The viewfinder is a small frame within a much larger one that reached to the periphery of my vision. This represented Chart of Immersion 5.

The resultant footage was then bought back 'under control' and edited into, *Beyond 3* and *2012 My Life Began*.

Beyond 3. Available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZtuCRyEooCQ

2012 My Life Began. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FiwUinOyOl4

Task 3.

Climb and Fall. 17th March 2012.

In this task, four performers were linked together in pairs with fabric whilst one performer played the piano. The pianist called 'rise' or 'fall' randomly, sometimes with long pauses, sometimes in quick succession. These were instructions for the paired performers to physically climb up or down each other. There was a limit of six upward commands and 6 down. Whilst doing this each performer was instructed to talk about their experience of love without stopping.

I responded by filming one pair whilst obeying the rise and fall instructions in relation to camera height. I also responded to the instruction to talk about love without stopping. This put my response to the task approximately between level 6 and 7 in the Chart of Immersion. This was extremely difficult, both physically and mentally. The need to express my experiences of love, without stopping, and to respond to the rising and falling instructions at the same time left me little mental capacity to operate the camera.

Task 4

Journey with Yourself to Yourself. 18th March 2012.

I include this task in this chapter as it represents level 4 in the Chart of Immersion and as such provides a contrast to my involvement in the other tasks documented here. This task

focussed on performers travelling very slowly from one location in the building to another. For this task I choose to remain at a distance and capture material with a view to constructing a short 're-presentation' of the performance material. I positioned myself as voyeur and hunter of images and slowed the footage down as my response to the command to move slowly. .

Beyond 4. Slow Motion Walking. Immersion 5. Edited. Available at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyGR6329JaA

Task 5

Support Journeys. 20th March 2012.

For this task, performers were asked to recall a time when they felt supported. Individually, one at a time, and in no particular order, they spoke of their experiences whilst taking a physical journey through space. With their bodies, all other performers supported this person's body, helping them to make the journey. Performers gave their weight freely to those supporting them, allowing themselves to be moved using a minimum of their own effort.

Initially I took the role of operating the camera with one hand and used my other hand/arm to join in the support for whoever was narrating/moving. Immersion 7. This positioned me half in and half out of the improvisation. This was awkward as the camera got in the way of the other performers, and myself, and I quickly became aware that my physical presence was restricting the possibilities of the improvisation. After several minutes I withdrew to Immersion 5, allowing my camera consciousness to predominate instead of half being in the improvisation.

Support Journeys. Available at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PhpiZXyIB_I&feature=youtu.be

APPENDIX 6

The Chart of Immersion

Reflections on the *Beyond* project and 'The Chart of Immersion'. (Practice 2).

The content of this appendix examines the author's experience of working with Dr Karla Shacklock on the *Beyond* project, 12/3/12 – 20/4/12, and The Chart of Immersion that I formulated from this work. Located in a disused pub in the City of Bristol, *Beyond* was a publically funded performance project drawing on Shacklock's performance making philosophy of 'Beyond' resulting in eight performances at the end of a five-week making process. Five performers with skills that included dance, music, and acting, were engaged along with a lighting designer, a scenographer and costume designer, and a creative producer. Shacklock directed the work and devised the making process. The author's role was to engage with the philosophy and process of 'Beyond' as a video artist. There was no set definition of the role or the outcome.

The Beyond making process pushes performers beyond what might be considered normal limits of engagement with creative theatre making, using physical and mental endurance tasks to access personal truths and experiences. 'Shacklock's process; 'Strive[s] to go beyond what we thought consciously, physically, vocally and emotionally possible, in order to find access to and express our true and authentic selves' (Shacklock 2010, p.63). Through improvisation tasks, performers access and reveal information about themselves and their relationship with the world, with minimal personal editing of information revealed and actions performed. Dance academic Janice Ross writes of; 'A trusting of […] improvisation to yield more genuine movement than the conscious mind could design'. (Ross 2003, p.45). It was through Shacklock's improvisation tasks that a range of performance material was generated that was both poetic and harsh, drawing on the unconsciousness of each performer to produce authenticity and the unexpected.

This information is then stored, both symbolically and physically, in written note form, in glass jars. The jars become a storehouse of this information and performance experience and are referred back to in performance making. They form an integral part of the resultant performance itself. Here a parallel exists between Shacklock's methodology and that of video documentation. Just as the performer's findings are stored in a jar for later use, the memory from the camera's perspective is stored in digital form for later use. This though was about the only obvious meeting point between the improvisations of the performers and my role as a video artist in the Beyond project.

My role in the production was to create performance material through the medium of video. Rather than being on the outside of the performer's and the director's creative process,

capturing performance material as an outside eye deliberating at each stage what might be effective for an end product, my involvement was to position myself as a collaborator within the improvisations. The nature of the making process was for the performers to undertake the improvisation tasks, in the region of 4 to 5 per working day, over a period of 20 days. I was present for a total of 9 days out of the 20.

For myself, the Beyond process involved exploring the possibility of being both inside and outside of the improvisations at the same time. This meant collaborating with the other performers whilst working with the medium of video and it's embedded brief of producing screen work. I set out to inhabit what seemed a contradictory world, that of being between the state of control, outside of the action, and being an improviser inside the action along with the other performers. Here then is a challenge to the filmmaker if they are to work with Shacklock's methodology. Shacklock draws on the philosophy of Maglietti to mirror her own in the desire to create performance authenticity that exists in a time that is not: 'manipulated, transferred, alienated, distanced' (Shacklock, K 2003, pp.94-95). Filmmaking might be seen to be the exact opposite of these qualities.

I decided to create a framework through which to document my own process and through which I might be able to examine the subsequent work. I created a seven-point scale of engagement through which my physical and psychological involvement with each task could be charted. I refer to this scale as The Chart of Immersion. At one end of the scale the video/film artist is so removed from the subject that the improvisers are not aware of his or her presence. At the other end, the video/film artist is fully involved as an improviser with only the absolute minimum of involvement with the camera in order for it's presence to exist and for it to be recording.

Chart of Immersion

1. Camera and operator hidden. Locked off. Performers unaware of being filmed. Full control over design and construction of viewfinder images. Adjusting for light, zoom, focus, sound. Voyeuristic.

2. Camera and operator at a distance. Locked off. Performers aware of being filmed. Full control over design and construction of viewfinder images. Adjusting for light, zoom, focus, sound.

3. Camera and operator outside 2 meters. Moving or locked off. Performers aware of being filmed. Full control over design and construction of viewfinder images. Adjusting for light, zoom, focus, sound.

4. Camera and operator within 2 meters. Moving or locked off. Performers aware of being filmed. Full control over design and construction of viewfinder images. Adjusting for light, zoom, focus, sound.

5. Camera and operator within 2 meters, engaging with performance. Restricted control over design and construction of viewfinder images. Adjusting for light. Auto-focus on

6. Improvising freely with the performers, allowing the camera to move freely. Limited attention to the viewfinder. Restricted control over design and construction of viewfinder images. Option to make occasional adjustments. Auto-focus on.

7. Improvising freely with the performers. No control of camera other than turning it on and off at the start and end of the performance. Camera held in hands as extension of the body. Basic consideration of filming direction. Auto-focus on.

These seven approaches to video/film making carry different degrees of challenge and usefulness. In terms of challenge, it is not difficult to engage with 1 to 4 of the chart. It becomes progressively more difficult after that as the filmmaker and camera become more engaged in the improvisation. The difficulties are, on one hand, of a practical nature. Actually holding a camera whist moving in amongst a group of improvising performers, not knowing who will move where when, being careful that the camera does not collide with people, and ultimately moving freely with the weight of a camera in the hands, is difficult. On the other hand, and this turned out to be a much greater challenge, to consciously operate a camera whilst responding to a improvisation task, documenting and performing at the same time, required me to divide my consciousness, or at least rapidly switch from one focus to another, back and forth.

At the point where Shacklock gave instructions for each task, I was in a position to decide how I would respond to them. The higher level of immersion I decided to take, the more likely I was to drop a level as the task progressed, e.g. Task 5 above.

The video footage that emerged from the range of tasks varied wildly. In my experience of filming improvisation, I have, on a number of occasions, left my camera on record setting by mistake. I might for example be walking with the camera in my hand, pointing towards the ground or sideways whilst the camera records. Material captured this way has often been interesting and I have included it in the final work of whatever project I have been working on. Footage that emerged from 5 and 6 was often reflective of this chance like imagery and has been used in some of the edits from the project.

My contribution to the project was ultimately a series of short edited videos that formed an element of the *Beyond* project's on-line presence.

What I did ultimately select for the edits, other than that of *Beyond 1,* was dictated by my choice to construct work with a design aesthetic based around principles of energy, rhythm, shape, movement and stillness, and by the choice to reflect what I perceived as the 'poetic and harsh' nature of the work. In the last work I drew together footage that I felt reflected the harshness and poetry of the project.

https://vimeo.com/39794567

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APPENDIX 7

Chris Lewis-Smith (CL-S) interview with dancers Nadine Hope (NH), Jess Macaulay (JM), and Meg Fynn (MF) after working with a GoPro camera in a studio based improvisation with musician Jeff Boehm.

ICIA Dance Studio. University of Bath. 7/5/15

CL-S: It's the 7th of May, this is the ICIA dance studio, and this is the end of an improve session with 3 dancers from Bath Spa University, who will introduce themselves, and Jeff Boehm who has been playing trumpet. The question is, dear dancers, were you whilst you were dancing with the GoPro attached to you, were you conscious of point the camera in any direction? And if you were, did it compromise your improvisation?'

JM: This is Jess Macaulay speaking, yes I was aware that I was wearing it, I think that you pay special attention to the directing the camera is pointing because you want it to be interesting for who ever will be watching, so you are very conscious not to point it at a blank wall, the floor. Maybe find yourself getting closer to the dancers because you want them to be seen, rather than something a little more boring to watch. I think naturally it effects your movement, you don't roll on the floor, or you don't act as freely as you would without it, but it's quite weightless so it's not something that you're conscious of lugging around as such.

CL-S: Were you, did you not, the rolling thing, is that a practicality, you don't want to roll on a camera?

JM: Yeah, you're not going to, yeah. You're not going to roll on top of a camera.

CL-S: When you were improvising then, are you saying that you are aware of where the camera was pointing? Did that somehow, you know how did that effect you as a dancer improvising because part of your consciousness, must have been with the camera?

JM: Yeah, which is so, your facings, I was conscious to face the other dancers, so that there was something to watch.

CL-S: so how is it, was it for you as an improviser, what, how did it effect, if at all, your consciousness as an improviser? How would it have been different if you didn't have the camera on you?

JM: Well, you would of just been just a bit more free. I think that you do improvise the same, you still move in the way that you want to, but you just, you maybe change your facings and make small adjustments, Yeah, in order to make it more interesting.

CL-S: Okay, thanks Jess.

MF: This is Meg Fynn speaking, I found that when I first put the camera on that I was really conscious of it at first, and then as I got into my movement more and more I became less conscious of the camera. But then moments would happen when another dancer was right in front of me and then in my head I imagined that that was creating a nice image, so the it reinforced that 'oh Yeah, I am wearing a camera', and then for a few seconds after that I would then be really conscious of the facing of the camera and 'oh should I follow them, should I not?' like, when you 're improving you're just totally intuitive and just do what you want, but when you think that you're capturing something good, do you choose to stay with it and maybe you shouldn't because then you're not being true to your improvisation…Yeah.

CL-S: You just said there that, there were moments that you were suddenly aware that the camera was pointing at a particular way, does that imply that you, at that point, switched out of improvisation mode to film/camera operating mode?

MF: Yeah, because I feel like because we had done several improvisations I was getting quite into the zone of the improvisations, but then, Yeah, but then I would totally switch when I thought that something really interesting was happening in front of me. And maybe if I'd, I don't know, maybe if we were doing something that was completely choreographed then there would be a lot more just blank walls or floor or yeah. I don't think you can say that it doesn't, it's not noticeable and that it doesn't effect you, it definitely does.

CL-S: As an improviser, as a dancer?

MF: Yeah as a dancer, yeah.

NH: Hi, this is Dini Hope, or Nadine sorry. I don't know I think that there was only like one moment where I actually thought 'I've got a camera on me', and that was when I was rolling and I looked down, and I was like ' I'm going to squish it'. But other than that I didn't really think about it. Because it's so light and you can't, you can't really feel it on you, I don't think I would of really just paid attention to it. And I think because you're so in the zone of improvising, you do, you focus on the other dancers that are there, and I think that in the

back of your head you kind of think, well, I'm getting filmed from other cameras, and then I'm just like, but I'm technically a camera as well, like trying to get other things from other dancers. So, it wasn't like at the forefront of my mind, like I need to capture something amazing. It was ' I could get something, but I could also get a lot of floor and a lot of walls, but it Didn't really, it didn't really change a lot, it was only when I thought I was going to break it that it kind of ringing alarm bells, but that was about it.

CL-S: Am I right in you saying that apart form the fact you thought you might break it because it was going on the floor you were kind of allowing it to film whatever it was filming? So you were conscious of it, I think you said you were conscious of it, but you weren't consciously filming, you were consciously dancing?

NH: Yeah, I wasn't actively conscious of like, this is, I'm doing a film, I was actively conscious of I'm dancing, and like the by product of me dancing would be like a weird film would come out of it, does that make sense?

CL-S: Can I ask you then from what you just said? Do you feel that your consciousness cannot inhabit those two spaces at the same time?

JM: Yeah I would say it was very difficult to put yourself in both of those roles.

MF: Yeah you are very much either or, I feel like you can't be both.

NH: Yeah, I feel because they are so separate it's either you are full on dancing and rolling about and just being that one thing, or you are trying to capture dance, does that make sense?

MF: But that's because all we know is the traditional way of filming, that's because we know you stand behind a camera and you don't move very much, and that's all we have ever seen, so, in our heads obviously when we are moving around with it, that's not what we think capturing film is, but you are.

NH: I reckon if we did it a lot more and this became like just a normal part of our dance routine.

MF: We'd be less conscious of the camera.

NH: You'd be less conscious of it but you would still have it in your head that there is a camera on your body.

CL-S: That's because there is a physical feeling of it being there?

NH: Yeah, and It's not like you could dive roll and like fall on the floor because you might damage it, but I think, if there wasn't any risk of either breaking it or hurting yourself because of the physical damage then I reckon you could just, kind of just do it.

MF: I think it would take practice, but like you said, if this was part of our curriculum and we did this twice a week and it didn't matter, we were told that it didn't matter what footage came out of it, just, then maybe we would become less and less conscious of it.

CL-S: Okay, I think that is all I needed to ask you, that was the question that I started off with. Thank you.

APPENDIX 8

Details of Lab 1 (Practice 2)

The aim of the Lab 1 1 was to create a production scenario in which I, as camera operator/filmmaker, relinquished an aspect of responsibility for deciding how the dancer is framed through the camera lens. Through four studio-based experiments, new possibilities for choreographing screen space arose. These possibilities were acted upon in the editing of the material captured to create a series of screendance works.

Practice set up.

Practice 1 took place over the 12th and 13th June 2013 in a dance studio at Bath Spa University, UK (room No. ANG01).

Those involved were:

Sophie Taylor, Dancer.

Louis Lewis-Smith, Musician.

Dani Landau, Technical Co-ordinator.

Chris Lewis-Smith, Director.

Three white projection screens, measuring approximately 3 x 2 meters landscape, were placed in the space (figuress 69 & 71) upon each of which live feeds from 3 cameras were projected (one per screen). The central screen was back-projected and the side screens were front-projected. Cameras used were two x Canon DSLR 600D and one Sony NEX FS100. Camera 1, fitted with a 50mm prime lens, relayed a close up image of the dancer onto screen 3. Camera 2, fitted with a 18 – 200mm lens, relayed a mid shot onto screen 2. Camera 3, fitted with a 35mm prime lens relayed a wide shot onto screen 1. A further Canon DSLR 600D was set to capture video of the musician, and a Sony Z1 was used to document the event with a wide shot. The back of the performance space comprised a white cyc. The dancer's performance space was approximately midway between the central screen and the cyc. The cyc was lit from above with 3 x 500W floodlights and from each side by Source 4 Junior 500 watt profiles and 500 watt Fresnels. The performance space was similarly lit from the sides by a Source 4 Junior 500 watt profile and a 500 watt Fresnel on each side, and lit obliquely from overhead by 2 x Source 4 Junior 500 watt profiles. The musician was lit obliquely from above with a single Source 4 Junior 500 watt profile and spill from the other lights.

Figure 69. *Lab 1.* Image of dancer from behind screen on performance space right.
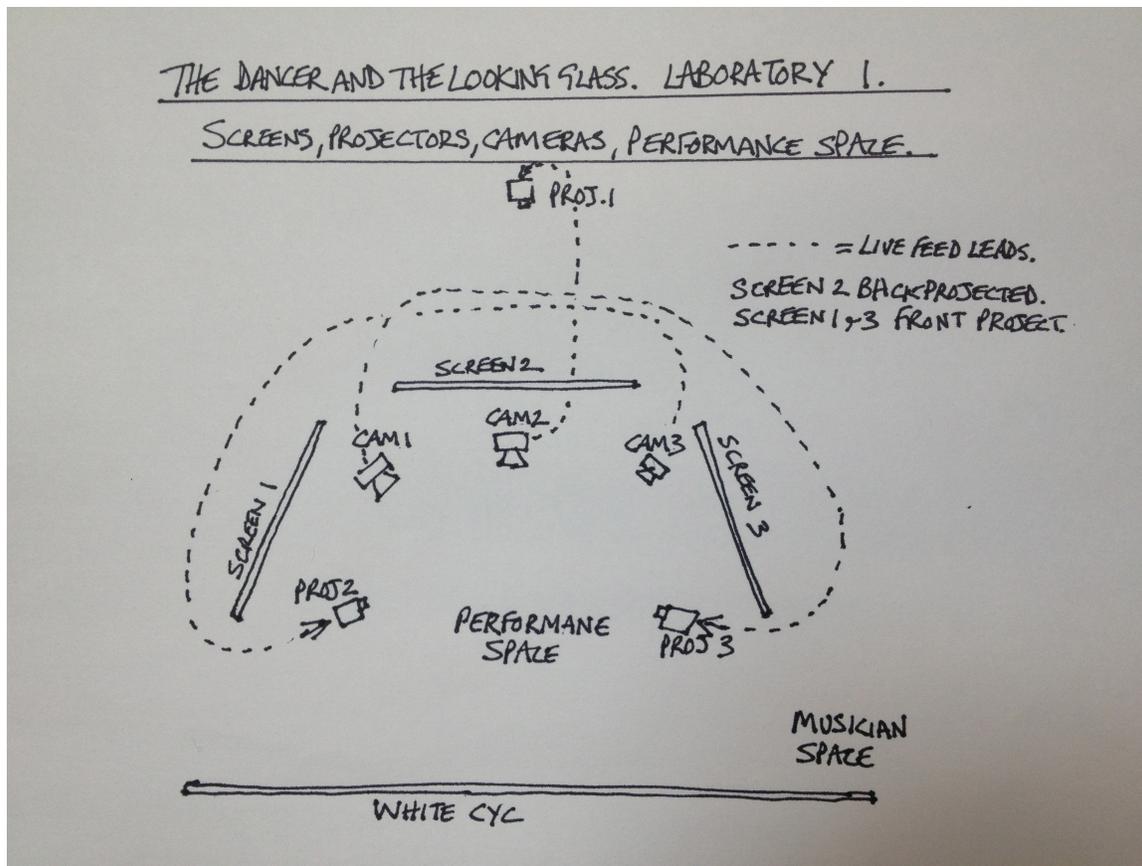
Figure 70. *Lab 1.* Floor plan of screen and projector set up.

The intension of the set up was to create white screen space (the cyc) for the dancer's background and for the dancer to be able to see the images of herself as captured through each of the cameras. The cameras and projectors were set up in such a way as to allow the dancer to be in all three images at once, or two only, or one only, or none at all.

The constructed 'capture' space was designed to allow the dancer to choose which camera she was at any time being captured by, if any, and for her to be aware of the parameters of the three frames and to decide not only where in the frame she might locate herself but if she would place herself within them at all. Other parameters for the dancer existed however through the space limitations of the performance space and through the amount of time available. My role was to construct the framework for capturing dance on camera, within which the dancer was to be able to improvise without my involvement in 'camera looking' [1]. An element of this framework involved timescales for the performances. This was dictated by the available time to conduct the experiments, and the physical limits of dancing and, to a lesser extent, playing music. The choice to use a white cyc as a

background was to remove as much additional visual material as possible allowing the dancer to relate to just herself in the frame rather than other images that a background to the dancing might present. I acknowledge that the white background is not an absence of visual information, as it is in itself an area of 'substance' that impacts on the text of the body, but it is neutral, beyond its colour, in that it has no pattern, line, changes of shade, or representation of form.

Prior to production day the dancer, Sophie Taylor, visited the studio and was able to observe the parameters of the set up and to see how the live feed environment operated. This gave her a 'heads up' on what was to happen the following day. I did not however give her any guidance in relation to how she might move, what inspiration she might use for moving, what she might wear, or how she might respond to the cameras. Likewise with the musician, I gave no guidance as to what he should play. At one extreme it was an option for the musician to play nothing and for the dancer to remain out of shot for the entire duration of the project. The environment that I had created, and the nature of the experiments, however, generated invisible, unspoken expectations that could not but impact on both dancer and musician. Had they decided to not play, or to remain out of shot, the outcomes of the experiment would have been more to do with the psychology of, and relationship between, the performers, the project, and myself as director. This is not what happened and it must be assumed that the performers, to some degree at least, conformed to the experiment, thus some element of guidance existed outside the choice making that I left up to them.

Figure 71. *Lab 1.* View from behind screens.

Practice Overview

Day 1 was given over to setting up the performance space, screens, cameras etc.

Day 2 consisted of four practical experiments.

Experiment 1

The feed from each camera was projected onto the screen closest to it (figure 70). This meant that the dancer could face herself on each screen. With cameras rolling, musician and dancer were given leave to perform for as long as they wished and until they arrived at a natural ending to their work. For the second performance (take2) the musician and dancer were asked to perform again, but to draw their work to a close after approximately 4 minutes. This was because I noted that in take 1 there were indications from them that they wanted to end the improvisation but were unsure if they should. They continued and Taylor

appeared to be getting tired. Taylor acknowledged this after take 1 and we agreed to set a time limit on all takes thereafter.

The first take of Experiment 1 concluded at 11 minutes and 38 seconds. The second take of Experiment 1 concluded at 4 minutes.

Experiment 2

Experiment 2 mirrored Experiment 1 but the feed cables from cameras 1 and 3 were switched. The effect of this was that the dancer now saw her *profile* in the side screens 1 and 3, as opposed to her facing her mediated self.

The first take of Experiment 2 concluded at 5 minutes 40 seconds. The second take concluded at 3 minutes 14 seconds.

Experiment 3

For this experiment the cameras were re-patched as for experiment 1. Cameras 1 and 3 were bought closer to the live performance space and the musician entered the performance space.

The first take of Experiment 3 concluded at 7 minutes and 30 seconds. The second take concluded at 3 minutes 30 seconds.

Figure 72. *Lab 1 (Experiment 3).* Dancer and musician together in performance space.

Experiment 4

This experiment was a departure from 1 and 2. Only the central screen 3 was connected to a camera. This camera was handheld by myself and I filmed Taylor while wearing a blindfold. She was still able to see herself on the screen, while giving verbal instructions to me to direct the lens at or away from her etc.

The first take of Experiment 4 concluded at 5 minutes 15 seconds. The second take of Experiment 4 concluded at 8 minutes 20 seconds.

My own role in the experiments was to design and run the project. In that sense I too was a collaborator in the creative mix. In addition, relinquishing control of the viewfinder did not mean abandoning control of the production process.

Experience of the experimental filmmaking with Karla Shacklock (See Appendix 6. Beyond project, Chart of Immersion – level 7) had demonstrated to me how even when I, as a camera operator, became closely involved in the performance that I was filming in an attempt to close the gap between camera operator and performer, I found it difficult to remove my awareness of what was in the camera viewfinder. The project also demonstrated that to abandon the camera to complete chance 'capture' (Chart of Immersion levels 6 and 7) was not necessarily an effective way to produce footage that either reflected the performance or be useful in the construction of a video edit that produced, from my perspective, an engaging aesthetic. The material captured in this way (Chart of Immersion level 6 and 7) in the Beyond project was at times similar to that caught by a camera operator, as might be seen in news reporting, running from a dangerous situation with the camera still recording but with no attempt to point it at anything. Twyler Tharpe, commenting on creative practice notes that: 'You don't get lucky without preparation, and there's no sense in being prepared if you're not open to the possibility of a glorious accident' (Tharp 2003, p.120). Tharp's observations reflect the set up for Practice 1 in that I wished to create an ordered production environment, operating within a set of specific parameters, but one in which unpredictable things might happen. The intension was to retake control of the video-making process in post-production, drawing on characteristics that emerged during production to inform the editing process, that were created, in part at least, by a decision making process that was not driven by my normal creative choices.

Each experiment, all of which took approximately five hours to complete, consisted of two camera takes each. Firstly an open ended take where the dancer and musician were given no instructions concerning how long they should carry on working for. Secondly a take that was to draw on the qualities that emerged in the first take but to be performed within a time frame of approximately 4 minutes. The first unlimited take would allow the performers to get used to the set up, explore the possibilities that emerged, and space to experiment whilst performing. The second timed take was to condense and develop their experiences from take 1. For this I felt that in the region of four minutes was long enough to sustain viewing of a short finished video. Experiment 4 was an exception to this in that the first take was shorter than the second one. An explanation for this follows.

Prior to Experiment 1 there was a short practice run with all the cameras and projectors running. This both ensured that the technical side of the experiment was working and also gave the performers an opportunity to experience the environment.

Practice Detail

Experiment 1

In Experiment 1 screen one (figure 70) was projected with a wide shot of the dancer, screen two with a mid shot, and screen 3 with a close up. The images on each screen corresponded to the camera that was beside it and projected in such a way that when Sophie moved left, her mediated images moved, as in a mirror, in the same direction.

The second take of Experiment 1 functioned within a similar performance set up but I asked the Taylor and Lewis-Smith, L. (musician) to improvise in the same manner for approximately 4 minutes. After 4 minutes I gave them a hand signal to indicate that it was time to find a conclusion to the work.

I asked Sophie for her initial reactions to working with the performance set up. She observed that:

> Having three screens and having me on each of the three screens, was like me working with myself. So it was like there was four of me in the room and by looking at each different screen and by looking at myself it looked like I was helping myself along the way (Taylor 2013).

The footage from this take clearly shows Taylor making eye contact with her mediated self and I had the impression that she was not improvising in a manner that was drawing on either just the music or the impulse to move spontaneously from a source within herself. Her focus on the screens appeared to almost be a distraction. She continued:

> They were all in the right, you know, they were going right when I was going right and going left when I was just going left. And um, so I felt that I was having a very linear pattern instead of it being a bit more spontaneous. I think that it was because it was the first go, as well, I was quite conscious of myself in the screen and what I should be doing. So that's how the first one felt (Taylor 2013).

I questioned Taylor on the idea that there was something that she; 'should be doing'. Her suggestion of this resonated with the notion of the performers 'conforming' to the experiment, or creating movement that had a quality of right or wrong. Taylor clarified this by explaining how she was working in such a way that made the movement material look 'good'. I asked her if she was able to expand on the meaning of this. She said;

> I think probably the aesthetic and what looks good on camera. I found myself, particularly in the camera that was magnified, doing the same sort of movement with my hands because I thought that looked good, and it looked, er, I know it sounds really stupid, but in my opinion it looked cool (Taylor 2013).

Were I to have been filming the work. i.e. operating a camera, and to have been the only witness to what was being captured in the viewfinder of the camera or cameras, it would not have been possible for Taylor to have had this experience. In this instance she was able to make judgements on her own performance from an outside perspective. Taylor noted:

> When someone films someone and if they stop and they say "do that again that's a really nice moment", and they capture it again'. Here she echoes how she would not conventionally have the experience of seeing through the lens. It would be the filmmaker who would note that a moment was 'really nice (Taylor 2013).

I was interested to know of Taylor had chosen to focus on any one screen more than the others. During take 1, and subsequently with take 2, I had judged, by watching, that she drew on screen 3 more than 1 or 2. She indicated that this was so and that: 'I wasn't as aware of the pan shot, 'cos in my mind I thought I'm probably going to be in that whatever, and if I'm not then I'm not' (ibid). I asked her if she could expand on how she had related to each of the screens:

> I think that because at the start I was trying to find this linear I liked the idea of being in one and then movement flowing into the next screen and then flowing onto the third screen and then taking that back. I found myself going out of one screen and appearing in another, and then appearing into the third, another thing I was trying to do as well. So I think it wasn't so much just feeling the dancing but looking at the screen and seeing what in the screen what I thought was interesting (Taylor 2013).

Experiment 2

The set-up for Experiment 2 was one in which the action of 'flowing' between screens, that Taylor had explored in Experiment 1, was more challenging. While screen 2 remained as it was, with a mid shot projection, the live feed connections between screens 1 and 3 were swapped. This meant that when Taylor looked at screen 1 she saw a close up profile image of herself, as captured by camera 3, and when she looked right to screen 3 she saw a wide shot profile of herself as captured by camera 1. Thus in both screens 1 and 3 she could only look at herself from 'another's' perspective. Furthermore, the 'very linear pattern' that she had worked with in Experiment 1 became a difficult option. Taylor's reactions to this set-up indicated that there was a shift in her movement quality;

> It was really odd to start with looking at it but then it gave me that feeling of being less conscious. It gave me the feeling of being less conscious because I'd be looking at one screen and obviously I wouldn't be doing that, so my thought process was a little bit different because I couldn't see necessarily what I was doing when I was looking at one screen, the opposite screen, so the movement became a little bit more natural (Taylor 2013).

There is a sense from Taylor's comments that there was a shift in her self-awareness. The effect of seeing oneself as in a mirror, i.e. looking back at oneself, as in *all* screens in Experiment 1, and as in screen 2 only in Experiment 2, is that of 'looking at oneself looking at oneself'. It is not possible to become detached from this perspective. To be able to see oneself 'not looking at oneself', as in a photograph perhaps, gives rise to the option of a different scrutiny, one in which the viewer can never make eye contact with his or herself and in which there is the potential for a sense of detachment.

Taylor's view of herself in screens 1 and 3 might be equated to that of positioning oneself between two mirrors that are set at 45%. Looking into one of the mirrors, the primary mirror, one sees one's profile in the secondary mirror. With this reflection can come disorientation regarding movement, as moving towards the primary mirror translates as a sideways movement in the secondary mirror. Taylor noted:

> I think I was concentrating a lot in that second one. Trying to work out my bearings. Looking back on it. It's not necessarily my bearings in the space, it's my bearings on the screen. I suppose that they are related to each other but in order to position yourself in one place on one of the screens it was not so easy (Taylor 2013).

Experiment 3

Experiment 3 represented a further shift in the performance environment, both in terms of the live space and the mediated space. In this set-up the live feed connections between screens 1 and 3 were returned to the status of Experiment 1 and I bought cameras 1 and 3 closer to the dancer. Camera 1 became a mid shot and camera 3 became a close/very close up. Additionally I bought the musician into the performance space and camera 2 was set to a medium wide shot that captured both him and Taylor, and was low enough to allow Taylor to be on camera at ground level. Camera 4 was set to record Lewis-Smith (musician) in medium close up. During Experiments 1 and 2 Lewis-Smith (musician) had been marginalised from the main performance space, although he was at all times filmed. In this experiment however his situation in the 'performance' space gave Taylor an additional presence beyond that of her mediated selves. In the first take (of 2) there was a clearly identifiable connection between Lewis-Smith (musician) and Taylor, both in her reaction to the sound and through eye contact. In the resultant video from camera 2 Taylor appears to glance at the screens from time to time and the performance is appear as more of a duet between musician and dancer than in experiments 1 and 2. Taylor's articulated her response to his presence:

> Whereas before obviously I registered him, it was just the sound whereas when he was in the space it was another body, and I didn't want to ignore that. I enjoyed experiment 3. I think I started to do much more gestural movement, which I do normally do, and um, move more. I know I was more on the floor. But in a strange way, because Louis was there, I felt like someone else was there so it's less self-conscious. So suddenly I could move more in the space (Taylor 2013).

Taylor's response suggested that her movement quality shifted again through the set up in Experiment 3. A further consideration, in relation to Taylor's feeling of being less self-conscious at this point, could have been that familiarity with the project enabled her to move more freely.

In spite of this, Taylor felt that her choreography throughout the whole project was: 'quite samey' (ibid). I asked her if she felt that the style of music had been in any part an influence on this.

I think it did but I recognise the movements that I do as my own in any case. And because there was so much concentration towards the screens that, it's funny, especially in the second one, because there was so much concentration towards the screens the movement came second. The screens were first and the movement was second (ibid).

That Taylor was given no theme or guidelines concerning movement material may have contributed to her observation that she worked with material that came naturally to her. Each experiment had only two takes of approximately 10 minutes and 4 minutes, and each experiment presented a new environment and a new challenge. A further aspect to each take was how the presence of the camera lenses represented a window to an unknown audience of the future. I questioned Taylor on this issue, asking her if it came into her consciousness that she was creating performance in front of an audience of the future. She replied:

Yeah. It does. I do think about it. But it's more afterwards than before that I think about that. And then I start moving, and then I think that, especially on the zoomed in one I'm thinking 'wow that's my face and it's really zoomed in. People are going to be looking at that', so there is that subconscious feeling there (ibid).

I asked her if her sharing the space with Lewis-Smith(musician) made her feel different in this respect.

Yes. Especially as I know, if the audience of the future just looked at me on the screen it would be different. Because I knew that Louis was there all along, whereas they might just think 'that's just music'. So that suddenly when he was introduced into the space as well it was more of a feeling of, I suppose more of a feeling of not being alone. Someone else being there. Yeah (ibid).

Experiment 4

Experiment 4 was somewhat askance to the inquiry within that of Experiments 1, 2, and 3, but was something I wished to try out in relation to the same idea of relinquishing control, or a degree of it, at the point of production. For this experiment only screen 2 was live on with a wide shot. The live feed images came from a camera held freely in my hands, and I

was blindfolded. I asked Taylor to direct my camera use by giving me verbal instructions. The two biggest shifts from the previous experiments were that the camera was mobile, and that Taylor had an extra task to perform as well as watching herself on the screen. The task presented practical difficulties for both Taylor and myself, with Taylor's attention split between improvising, watching, and guiding me. For myself, with the camera attached to a cable that trailed across the floor at my feet, I had to move carefully to ensure that I did not trip over it. In addition I could not tell if the camera was level and also quickly became disorientated in the space. Taylor's reactions to experiment 4 were different to the others. When I asked her what her experience had been she replied:

> Very nerve-racking, the first one [take 1]. It was really nerve-racking. Because I have responsibility for you. And obviously I don't want anything to happen to you. So in the first one I did play it safe. I also had to, er, once I got into it, it was fine. but it was just making sure I was still dancing as I'm asking you to do things. So making sure it's not just, which it might be, it might look like when you look back on it on the camera, that it looks like I'm doing movement that is very similar all the way, and I think that slightly did happen because I've tried to split my concentration. Because I find talking and dancing quite easy when I'm by myself, but then obviously I'm responsible for your body as well, that's another thing on top of that to think about (ibid).

My own experience, in conversation with Taylor, was as follows:

> Well from my point of view I didn't feel vulnerable because I trusted you and also I kind of knew how big the space was. But I did get quite disorientated, I didn't actually know where I was at times and also when I was moving the camera around with your instructions I wasn't sure whether you could possibly be in the shot because I was moving so quickly, I thought, goodness, how could you, I'm panning left left left, are you running round? And I was also aware of the fact that everything that I normally do had been taken, all the decision making that I would normally make through the viewfinder had been taken away from me, which wasn't the same in experiment one two and three because I had set up something technically so now I was at a distance from it. Now I'm back in the role of operating a camera but the one thing that I would have to be able to do I couldn't do, so I was really in a completely new world. But I also quite enjoyed it in a way because I felt like I was

liking not having to make decisions, I was thinking something was going to come out of this that was better than something I could possibly think of myself, because my own creative choices are a limitation so I was really interested and intrigued to see what this was going to look like.

There were some technical issues that I had to deal with. Whether the camera was tipped left or right, where the cable was going to be, and so on. When you asked me to move fast at one time I moved over to one side and I thought, I didn't know where I really was, and I thought that I'm moving in a particular direction and surely I'm going to hit something, is there something here? But I didn't so I was okay. The other issue, that was solved in the second take, was that I couldn't hear very well because the music was loud and I had the thing (blindfold) over my ears. But that seemed to be fine the second time. I think there was one instruction I didn't hear, I could hear your voice but I wasn't sure what it was, but otherwise you were very clear and that was very useful to me, so the second set of instructions were much different, instead of saying them softly you said (*loudly)* LEFT, MOVE LEFT*,* FAST! So I felt more secure in a way because, and when you said STOP I know I could just stop and I'd be all right. So um, but I felt very um, I felt very in your hands, safety wise, I know that you were guiding me, but I didn't have a problem with that because I trust you, as a dancer particularly, you're aware of the special dynamics and when to stop and start. I didn't have any problem with that at all, but I was in that position, I was in your care (Lewis-Smith 2013).

Findings

Through the experience of setting up and directing Laboratory 1, a number of practical issues relating to video capture in the studio environment arose. Issues concerning lighting, the best use of lenses, projector power, and the best use of the studio space were among the technicalities that were leaned from for future practice. These findings will not be dealt with here, as they are peripheral to the core of The Dancer and the Looking Glass enquiry. Suffice to say that that in spite of the potential for an improved quality of the video works that emerged, the experiments were not compromised in regard to their primary objectives, that of exploring new choreographic practice in the construction of work for the single screen, through shifting the balance of control in the dancer/camera relationship.

Parallels exist here between my process and the challenges imposed on filmmaker Jorgen Leth by filmmaker Lars Von Trier in their joint production *The Five Obstructions* (2003). Von Trier's imposition of a set of challenging parameters within which Leth had to comply in the making of five short films pushed Leth to create films that he arguably would not have made left to his own creative instincts

The video capture from each of the four experiments was examined to identify characteristics that had emerged and my editing process was informed by them. Whilst the edits from Practice 1 are informed by far less radical restrictions than those imposed on Leth by Von Trier, they are nonetheless similarly led by guidelines of restriction that come from a source external to my normal instinctive creativity. I acknowledge that the design of Practice 1 is constructed by my own creative decision-making. The point I wish to make is that I have created a production scenario in which creative 'rattle room' allows for unforeseen opportunities to emerge and a degree of authorship given to the dancer, thus distancing my instinctive pattern of making.

Leth's initial reactions to the restrictions indicate that he believed that they would be counterproductive. Speaking in Copenhagen about the restrictions of only being able to use 12 frames per shot in the edit, that Von Trier has set, Loth remarks: 'It's completely insane. Not more than 12 frames long. Damn it... It's totally destructive. What the hell does he expect me to do? He's ruining it from the start. It'll be a spastic film' (Leth 2001). Later in the film, Leth is seen speaking to camera in a video diary (November 2001). He is in Havana lying in bed, apparently sleepless in the early morning. 'This is too hard. It really is' (ibid). The idea that Leth would not have used these parameters in his normal practice is the same as in the production process of Practice 1 in that my instinctive creative response that would have drawn on my own habitual approach are subverted. Though my approach may be one that evolves, it nonetheless has a lineage in creative patterns from past projects and is as such a recognisable style in my work.

Leth later re-evaluates the restrictions, commenting that: 'The 12 frames are a paper tiger' (ibid). [*Paper Tiger* - a Chinese term for something that at first appears to be a threat but does not stand up to being challenged]. After watching the film together, Von Trier comments that the 12 frames were a gift. Leth replies 'Yes, that's how I took them' (ibid).

The same applies to the structures, drawn from video captured, that guided the editing of the Practice 1 video. As a means of testing my habitual approach against edits informed by

the characteristics of captured material, I approached the editing of experiment 1 by making an immediate edit in a manner that I felt reflected my habitual style.

This 'habitual' edit (Appendix 10. *Lab 1. Ex.1. Take 2)* uses all five cameras that were on set, the fifth being the documentary camera that recorded the dancing filming event.

On viewing and working with material from Experiment 1, three qualities straight away stood out that had not been so clear to me during production. These were that:

a. The body was often confined to the edge of the screen.

b. The body was at times absent from it altogether.

c. There was a predominance of unoccupied screen-space.

These qualities occurred in the footage from all three cameras – 1, 2, and 3 (camera 4 was capturing the musician, and camera 5 the documentary camera). I had hypothesised that the footage from the wide-shot camera would have a more central view of Taylor and she would be in shot most of the time. However, Taylor has at least a part of her body out of the screen for 3.22 minutes of the 11.38, over a quarter of the take. I approached edit 1 of Experiment 1 using characteristics 'a' and 'c', employing only frames in which Taylor was not fully in the screen-space. The exceptions to this were eleven seconds of footage where Taylor moves close and central to the camera and her head and arm leave the top of the screen-space. This moment was not in keeping with quality 'c' and so I rejected this section. Quality 'b' was also reflected in the edit. The absence of the body in the screen-space, leaving only a white background, has the effect of suspending time in that space, as there are no markers against which to register the passing of screen-time. Time for the viewer at such a point can only therefore relate to the non-screen 'real' world in which the act of watching is situated. In edit 2, as opposed to edit 1, Taylor's action is manipulated and cut up. The linear nature of the original act fragmented, and a sense of temporal interference is present.

Barthes suggests that: 'The man or woman who emerges from it [the cinema screen] continues living' (2000, p.57). When Taylor is absent from the screen the spectator's engagement with screen action is paused, as there is nothing to look at. The spectator may at that point 'continue living' as their awareness re-focuses on the environment beyond the screen and the act of being a spectator. There is a suggestion, as Taylor leaves the edge

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of the screen that the dancing body might exist beyond the window of that screen. Taylor's energy, the trajectory of her movements, continue, as it were, and the screen is extended in our imagination. In response to this idea I created a surrounding frame of the same colour as the screen environment to support the idea of this reading of the work. I also created a sense that the dancer exits the central screen space, she continues to dance in the area beyond the camera's view. This, in keeping with Tharp's 'glorious accidents', was an opportunity that presented itself through her movement material.

Figure 73. *Lab 1 (Take 1. Edit 3).* Dancer existing beyond the edges of the frame.

In one sense I have taken the freedom that Taylor had in production, that of her being able to move in and out of the frame at will, and manipulated it to extend the frame beyond that which she choose to move in and out of. On viewing the video Taylor noted that:

> I like this most recent edit, like the black and white, I always like black and white though. It's interesting you editing it as it takes control away from the dancer, as the filming that we've done has been edited & changed, which then presents the question, once the filming is done and it has been recorded: is the dancer no longer in control? (Taylor 2013)

A characteristic, further to that of a, b, and c as on page 210, presented itself on viewing some of the footage. This was a constant shifting in and out of focus in the video from

camera 3. Camera 3, the Sony NEX F100, was set to auto focus. A tiny dark speck on the cyc, that neither I nor Danni Landau, technical co-ordinator of the project, had noticed during production, constantly drew the cameras focus to it each time Taylor left the frame. Taylor's reappearance in the frame caused the camera to re-focus, hunting between her and the speck until it refocused on her. In Experiment 2, Take 2 (3 minutes 14 seconds) the result was just under 1 minute 30 seconds of footage with Sophie in focus, 1 minute 57 seconds of Sophie out of focus. and 47 seconds with Sophie out of the frame. I used these features to dictate two edits of this experiment. The first cut out all frames that were out-of-focus and frames that contained nothing. The second edit cut out all frames that were in focus and frames that contained nothing. In edit 2 I also masked out the speck at any moments that it came into focus. In addition, in both edits, I removed most of the half tones in response to the qualities of reduction that were emerging through the editing criteria.

The resultant sense of unpredictability in both these short edits is a shift away from my 'intuitive' editing style. The dancer's body moves smoothly through the frame for a period of time and then rapidly relocates within the screen space without any apparent sense of clear choreographic reason (i.e. working to a rhythm, a pattern, a development of shape, movement direction or speed). At times the dancer appears to 'replace herself' in the screen space, moving out of screen right, only to re-enter instantly from screen left. A further sense is generated, that of the dancer being trapped within the frame – perhaps the complete opposite of the freedom she had to move in and out of it during production. Taylor's moments to herself, off screen, have been taken from her and the frame forms a cage in which she appears, bounced between its sides, her continuity denied.

FOOTNOTE

(1). 'Camera looking' is a term used by Douglas Rosenberg referring to '…an active performance' by the camera operator' (Rosenberg, 2012, p.69).

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APPENDIX 9

Chris Lewis-Smith (CL-S) interview with Sophie Taylor (ST)

Transcript of recorded conversation 13 June 2013. Sophie Taylor (dancer in Lab 1) and Chris Lewis-Smith.

Bath Spa University dance studio (room number ANG01).

CL-S. Sophie, Experiment one which was the most straightforward in a way with your being able to see yourself on three screens at different closeness's and you were given some kind of authorship of where you were in the screen and whether you were in it or not. I wondered if you would be able to talk about that in terms of empowerment or authorship and the difference between being normally filmed which you are used to as well, and generally what that experience was like for you.

ST: Um, it was different because, for one, having three screens and having me on each of the three screens, was like me working with myself. So it was like there was four of me in the room and by looking at each different screen and by looking at myself it looked like I was helping myself along the way.

CL-S: How interesting.

ST: That's what it was like. Um, because of the positioning of the cameras on the first time we did it I felt that I had to be on one unclear I felt that I had to be quite upright and um I kept trying to make it linear, I think to start off with.

CL-S: Are you talking about experiment one, when we had screens left middle right, being camera left middle and right?

ST: Yeah. They were all in the right, you know, they were going right when I was going right and going left when I was just going left. And um, so I felt that I was having a very linear pattern instead of it being a bit more spontaneous. I think that it was because it was the first go, as well, I was quite conscious of myself in the screen and what I should be doing. So that's how the first one felt.

CL-S: When you say 'what you should be doing' is that because you still felt that there was some, er, right or wrong, or some kind of instruction that wasn't there that you could have been responding to?

ST: Erm, I think I mean what would look good.

CL-S: Ok.

ST: So not necessarily if it was right or wrong or anything like that. Just what would look good.

CL-S: In that sense, does that mean that what you would normally be expecting is the person who is operating the camera to be making the decisions as to what looked good or not? – that was given over to you.

ST: Yes. In a stereotypical way I think that when someone films someone and if they stop and they say 'do that again that's a really nice moment' and they capture it again. Yeah, like that.

CL-S: Before I move on to question experiment number 2 can I ask you if you are able to expand on the idea of 'what looks good'? I don't know whether you can unpack that as an aesthetic or where you are or what does that mean… you know what I mean?

ST: I think probably the aesthetic and what looks good on camera. I found myself, particularly in the camera that was magnified, doing the same sort of movement with my hands because I thought that looked good, and it looked, er, I know it sounds really stupid, but in my opinion it looked cool.

CL-S: Yeah, that's legit.

ST: Yeah, so that's what I thought. So I was trying to capture moments from looking at myself which, erm, were I suppose aesthetically pleasing and cool. Quote unquote.   ,

CL-S: Can I ask you, on the bigger screen in the wide shot, were you conscious of where you were in the frame?

ST: I think that I was so conscious of where I was in the medium screen. (points to screen 3)

CL-S: Close up.

ST: Close up screen, I wasn't as aware of the pan shot, because in my mind I thought I'm probably going to be in that whatever. And if I'm not then I'm not.

CL-S: Did you consciously think you wanted to be in all three screens at the same time or were you aware of the possibility of moving out of one of them and into another at all?

ST: I think that because at the start I was trying to find this linear I liked the idea of being in one and then movement flowing into the next screen and then flowing onto the third screen and then taking

that back. I found myself going out of one screen and appearing in another, and then appearing into the third, another thing I was trying to do as well. So I think it wasn't so much just feeling the dancing but looking at the screen and seeing what in the screen what I thought was interesting.

CL-S: Yeah. So do you think that you gave more attention – I think you've just said this – I'm not trying to put this into your head - you gave more attention to the close up than and then less attention to the wide?

ST: Yeah.

CL-S: Than perhaps in between?

ST: Yeah.

CL-S: OK. That's really interesting. Can I move on to experiment two, and experiment two being that we switched the screens around so that you weren't looking at yourself anymore, you weren't looking at yourself looking at yourself.

ST: Yeah.

CL-S: Did that throw you?

ST: Um. It was really odd to start with looking at it but then it gave me that feeling of being less conscious. It gave me the feeling of being less conscious because I'd be looking at one screen and obviously I wouldn't be doing that so, my thought process was a little bit different because I couldn't see necessarily what I was doing when I was looking at one screen, the opposite screen, so the movement became a little bit more natural. I think I was concentrating a lot in that second one. Trying to work out my bearings.

CL-S: OK so more….

ST: At the start…

CL-S: Disorientation? In terms of your bearings in the space?

ST: Yeah. It's funny. Looking back on it. It's not necessarily my bearings in the space, it's my bearings on the screen.

CL-S: That's quite critical.

ST: Yeah.

CL-S: I suppose that they are related to each other but it means that, or does it mean that, in order to position yourself in one place on one of the screens it was not so easy because you weren't – you were kind of working by looking?

ST: Yeah.

CL-S: You couldn't look at yourself looking at yourself.

ST: Yeah. So it was an odd feeling.

CL-S: Do you think it affected your choreography at all?

ST: I found my choreography, quite a lot of the time, being quite samey.

CL-S: All the way through this whole day?

ST: Yeah.

CL-S: Was that also because we had a particular kind of sound throughout the day? Do you think that influenced the way you moved?

ST: I think it did but I recognise the movements that I do as my own in any case. And because there was so much concentration towards the screens that, it's funny, especially in the second one, because there was so much concentration towards the screens the movement came second.

CL-S: Yes. So you fell back on your vocabulary that your body knows?

ST: Yeah. The screens were first and the movement was second.

CL-S: That's okay, that's an interesting thought as well isn't it. So the second one was more challenging in a way, Was it making you work harder?

ST: Yeah, my brain was like…

CL-S: okay.

ST: Yeah.

CL-S: And in the third one where we kind of closed in a bit more, Louis became more a part of that, much more a part of the visuals, because he was in the same screen space as you. Well first of all just on that, did having Louis being in the same screen space as you influence what you, I mean, did you, did that effect the choreography at all?

ST: Um yeah.

CL-S: With your relationship with him as a musician?

Sophie: Yeah. Straight away as he was in the space. Whereas before obviously I registered him, it was just the sound whereas when he was in the space it was another body, and I didn't want to ignore that.

CL-S: When you talk about the space are you talking about screen space, live space, or both?

ST: Both.

CL-S: OK. Did er.. we changed the cameras again so you had less screen space. In a way it was putting you more tightly into a confined space, and I wonder how you felt about that, whether that was awkward, or liberating?

ST: I enjoyed experiment 3. I think I started to do much more gestural movement, which I do normally do, and um, move more. I know I was more on the floor. But in a strange way, because Louis was there, felt like someone else was there so it's less self-conscious. So suddenly I could move more in the space.

CL-S: It feels like that… well there's a question that comes before that. When you are watching yourself on screen, as a live feed. Are you aware of yourself as creating a performance that is in front of an audience of the future? Do you know what I mean?

ST: Yes.

CL-S: Does that come into your consciousness?

ST: Yeah. It does. I do think about it. But it's more afterwards than before that I think about that. And then I start moving, and then I think that, especially on the zoomed in one I'm thinking 'wow that's my face and it's really zoomed in. People are going to be looking at that', so there is that subconscious feeling there.

CL-S: Did you find then that when Louis and you shared the screen space together, I think you implied that there was less of a focus on you, in some way?

ST: Yes.

Chris: I wonder if those things tie together, the audience of the future. Knowing that it is not just you that they are looking at? That you are sharing the amount of looking that is coming at you with someone else. So you become less focussed on.

ST: Yes. Especially as I know, if the audience of the future just looked at me on the screen it would be different. Because I knew that Louis was there all along, whereas they might just think 'that's just

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music'. So that suddenly when he was introduced into the space as well it was more of a feeling of, I suppose more of a feeling of not being alone. Someone else being there. Yeah.

CL-S: Then we moves onto experiment 4, blindfold, which I. I'm involved in this as well so… I don't know if you want to open on this and say what your experience of this was.

ST: Very nerve-racking. The first one. It was really nerve-racking. Because I have responsibility for you. And obviously I don't want anything to happen to you. So in the first one I did play it safe. I also had to, er, once I got into it, it was fine. but it was just, making sure I was still dancing as I'm asking you to do things. So making sure its not just, which it might be, it might look like when you look back on it on the camera, that it looks like I'm doing movement that is very similar all the way, and I think that slightly did happen because I've tried to split my concentration. Because I find talking and dancing quite easy when I'm by myself, but then obviously I'm responsible for your body as well, that's another thing on top of that to think about.

CL-S: you said particularly with the first one, why was the second one that different?

ST: Because I think we had given it a go the first time, and you were fine.

And then I start moving, and then I think that, especially on the zoomed in one I'm thinking 'wow that's my face and it's really zoomed in. People are going to be looking at that Sophie; Exactly.

CL-S: well from my point of view I didn't feel vulnerable because I trusted you and also I kind of knew how big the space was. But I did get quite disorientated, I didn't actually know where I was at times and also when I was moving the camera around with your instructions I wasn't sure whether you could possibly be in the shot because I were moving so quickly, I thought, goodness, how could you, I'm panning left left left, are you running round? And I was also aware of the fact that everything that I normally do had been taken, all the decision making that I would normally make through the viewfinder had been taken away from me, which wasn't the same in experiment one two and three because I had set up something technically so now I was at a distance from it. Now I'm back in the role of operating a camera but the one thing that I would have to be able to do I couldn't do, so I was really in a completely new world. But I also quite enjoyed it in a way because I felt like I was liking not having to make decisions I was thinking something was going to come out of this that was better than something I could possibly think of myself, because my own creative choices are a limitation so I was really interested and intrigued to see what this was going to look like.

There were some technical issues that I had to deal with. Whether the camera was tipped left or right, were the cable were going to be, and so one. When you asked me to move fast at one time I moved over to one side and I thought, I don't know where I really was, and I thought that I'm moving in a particular direction and surely I'm going to hit something, is there something here. But I didn't so

I was okay. The other issues, that were solved in the second take, was that I couldn't hear very well because the music was loud and I had the thing (blindfold) over my ears. But that seemed to be fine the second time. I think there was one instruction I didn't hear, I could hear your voice but I wasn't sure what it was, but otherwise you were very clear and that was very useful to me, so the second set of instructions were much different, instead of saying them softly you said (loudly) LEFT, MOVE LEFT, FAST! So I felt more secure in a way because, and when you said STOP I know I could just stop and I'd be all right. So um, but I felt very um, I felt very in your hands, safety wise, I know that you were guiding me, but I didn't have a problem with that because I trust you, as a dancer particularly, you're aware of the special dynamics and when to stop and start. (16.39). I didn't have any problem with that at all, but I was in that position, I was in your care.

APPENDIX 10

Films made by me, prior to this thesis, used as part of the research.

The following films, directed by me, are drawn on to support the research within this thesis:

Watergate Bay (2008). Available at: https://vimeo.com/14770585

Bodmin Whale (2012). Available at: https://vimeo.com/15153171

31 Years. (2012). Available at: https://vimeo.com/35964826

Films made by me as part of the research practice of this thesis. DVDs included at the end of appendices.

1. The Glasshouse (2016) Available at: https://vimeo.com/175591878

2. Variation 1 (2016) Available at: https://vimeo.com/174835555

3. To be Watched While Eating an Orange. (2015). Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EDkD-7OFKDI

4. Edge Studio Improvisation (2014) *Available at:* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lwlZG4dc_KY

5. Six. (2014). Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=76QUKl3oGN8

Films made by me as a result of the research practice of this thesis.

LAB 1 series (2013)

Lab 1. Ex 1. Take 2. *Habitual.* Available at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EWCAyovwVEU

Lab 1. Ex 1 Edit 2*. Always Touching Frame Edge.* Available at:
https://vimeo.com/70129973

Lab 1. Take 1. Edit 3*. Inner and Outer Frame.* Available at
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qCLtteeRaig

Lab 1. Blindfold. Available at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=frTdlhberCg

Lab 1. Ex 2. Edit *1 In Focus, Always in Viewfinder, Bleached.* Available at:
https://vimeo.com/73392563

Lab 1. Ex 2. Edit 2. *Out of Focus, Always in Viewfinder, Bleached.* Available at:
https://vimeo.com/73477198

Lab 1. Ex 3. Take 1. Cam 2. *Dancer and Musician Single Take*. Available at
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WbhBxa8JtT0

BEYOND series (2012)

Blindfold Beyond. Available at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wiPdAw6uSiU&feature=youtu.be

Support Journeys. Available at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PhpiZXyIB_I&feature=youtu.be

2012 My Life Began. Pushing performers beyond normal limits. Immersion 6, edited.
Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FiwUinOyOI4

Beyond 3. Pushing performers beyond normal limits. Immersion 6, edited. Available at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZtuCRyEooCQ

Beyond 4. Slow Motion Walking. Immersion 5. Edited. Available at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyGR6329JaA

Beyond 7. Travelling Conversations. Immersion 4. Edited. Available at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OScPH6y1DdE

Beyond 8. Travelling Conversations. Immersion 5. Edited. Available at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iagNftx3bbY

Beyond 9. (10 frames per sec) Available at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=62H_ESCKsM8

Beyond. Inside the Looking Glass. Final Montage. Available at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0BpYRKSWapU

APPENDIX 11

On-line database of Average Shot Lengths in screendance.

Available at: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1011HRUrQaDMzOL_B5cgSm-_-jztj4tuN82kCDGLbjaU/edit#gid=0

APPENDIX 12

Christopher Lewis-Smith (CL-S) interview with Xavier Santos (XS), Polly Franks (PF), after the filming of The Glasshouse at the University of Bristol Botanic Garden. 2nd July 2016. 11.30am

Location: Café on Whiteladies Road, Bristol,

CL-S: When you take the camera do you feel that you feel that you are still a performer, or to what degree do you feel you are still a performer in the work?

PF: I'd say for me when I am being a filmmaker as well as a performer, I don't see it as two separate roles. For me it's part of the dance.

XS: When we first started working in the studio I first felt that I had two roles. As a dancer when I was in front of the camera and as a camera operator when I was behind the camera,

and I really couldn't feel the character when I was behind the camera. But today, not every time, but I could feel the character behind the camera, especially when I was recording Polly in that first moment. When I found her in the middle. When I first came to that moment it was 'oh, there's a girl there'. I really felt my character, but at the same time I was with the camera. IN the studio I did not feel this.

PF: I think I felt that for you as well. When you were filming me I was looking at the camera and I could see the camera but I could also see you and your facial reactions, and it kind of helps you as well.

CL-S: were you playing to the camera but you were actually playing to Xavi?

PF: Yeah. You were kind of smiling, kind of like I helped you as well. I guess that's what you can do when you have a camera.

XS: In the last shot, in the last recording …

CL-S: When I operated the camera?

XS: Yeah, there was a bit when I was behind you and I was smiling to Polly to give her that sense of character so we could carry on with our story. And I think that helped you.

PF: Yeah.

CL-S: You said that when we first started rehearsing the project it was more difficult to be – you said Xavi – more difficult to be a performer when you took the camera, you felt there were two separate rolls but today you are indicating that those roles have come together so you have managed to maintain a performer status even when you were behind the camera. Why has that changed from when we first ran the piece to today?

XS: I think firstly it was because of being in the place with the costume and feeling the environment around me and secondly, and definitely, because we had more practice with the camera. I think it was because it was because of the practice.

CL-S: Is that your experience too Polly? Do you feel that there's a difference from when we started the project, when you were switching from being camera operator to performer, in and out of those roles, to how it was today?

PF: At the beginning the merger of being a performer and camera-person it merged into one for me. I still feel like that now. But at first I did not feel very confident at the transitions, but I found by the end of it I founds those transitions flowed into one another better.

CL-S: Do you mean the transitions when we swapped cameras?

PF: Yeah. At the beginning I thought of them as not two separate roles. I feel like, looking back at the first day, I feel a lot more confident about those transitions, in between having to perform and having to film.

CL-S: Without wanting to put words into your mouth, but I think you're saying that it was the practicing of operating the camera that's allowed you to be better at it so that you … didn't have to worry so much about it?

PF: Yeah.

XS: Yes definitely. It's like you have to create the choreography and you have to decide what you are going to do next and you can't enjoy the movement of that quality. Then at the end when you have been repeating the choreography you can get in that comfort zone when you can forget what are you doing next, and you are just enjoying it. I felt that with the camera. It was like a choreography, so when we start, taking the camera was part of the choreography so I wasn't thing 'I have to pick up the camera now', I was like looking at the flower and taking the camera.

CL-S: You mean that was all one action?

XS: Yes. It was really natural, yes. Right at the end when we were recording sound and I had to all the things without taking the camera I really felt the story as it is, like, the gardener to be there, like look to that flower and then carry on walking and then suddenly see Polly. That thing without the camera made me really understand the story without thinking I'm performing or I'm recording. So I'm saying maybe we should have done that when we first got there.

CL-S: Are you saying that we should have clarified the story first?

XS: Yes, before we started recording. So I could feel more and understand more and be in the story in this way. You know when I was looking at the flower and I picked the camera up and I started waling round, and I had to look up with the camera? In that moment when

we were recording the sound I was without the camera so I just did this. I realised oh, that's it, that's what I had to do with the camera.

CL-S: So you need to do t with your own eyes first?

XS: Yes, and then do with the camera, because I had never done t with my eyes, I just did like with the camera.

CL-D: What do you perceive as the challenges that we have gone through, making a film that's a single take? Did you encounter any particular difficulties making a film as a single take?

PF: What I found really difficult with it being one whole shot is that when you're holding it and you are taking the camera from someone else, and if you accidently jolted it then you're like 'oh no, ruined it', and you have that thought. Because normally if you jog a little bit you think like 'stop', we'll do that again. But you can't. For me every time I had the camera I though, oh no, I moved it. Oh no, that's not going to look good. Then when you see it it's not as bad as you thought it would be in your head, But yeah, I think that's the challenge to kind of accept that it might wobble a little bit but you have to carry on. And I think it's the same with movement. If you've done something wrong, say you're on stage, you can't stop and do it again you just carry on and let it take you.

XS: Like that thing with the hat, when it fell on the floor, we had to carry on as if we were on stage. The audience is there, the camera is there, we can't stop.

CL-S; You couldn't go 'stop, let's do that bit again'.

XS: Yeah. But I think a good point of doing a one shot video is that you are more into the story. So you perform from the beginning to the end. You don't have like 'let's stop, let's get out of our characters when the camera operator is ready'. You are in your character from the beginning to the end.

Sometimes the story felt like it was really real, to be actually be there in costume and I think I got really into it. Like when I came to open the first door in the building, it was oh, I'm in this garden. I'm a gardener. I felt like it was real

CL-S: Even though you had picked a camera up?

XS: Yeah, Yeah. The environment really helped. It was beautiful working there.

CL-S: I noticed that as we did more takes you became more full of character. You Polly began to become more flirtatious and playful, and you began to do additional things. I think from when the hat first git thrown and you had to find it in the bushes. Then in the last hat throw I thought you weren't going to find it at all. It was like you had to burrow your way through the leaves, and you eventually found it. I think that probably translates quite well onto film because it was quite genuine, you were really trying to find it and the film felt real, really alive.

XS: Yes, in that moment, when I didn't know where the hat was, it felt like more natural because when the hat was just on the floor I was thinking I have to look to the floor like really natural, but there I was 'where is my hat?' Really like where is my hat! So I tried to find it. When we first started I was thinking like 'what if we messed up? We would have to start again'. I was thinking like that really happened when we were recording, but today I realized that we always started at the beginning to the end without stopping in the middle, and even if we see a mistake, we would just carry on. Nothing like a big deal.

PF: I think that's good though going from start to finish even if things go wrong because you never know, when you look at the footage, there might have been a chance that it might have gone wrong but happened to work so well.

CL-S: Do you feel as performers that the making of this project is more like doing a live performance?

PF: For me it felt like I do and I don't. From the way it was filmed it makes me feel like it was like a live performance in the way that if you go wrong you carry on. No-one knows as such what the piece is. But if it's a really good bit and you have the face of 'oh no', it would ruin it just as it would ruin a live performance. You've just got to carry on, improvise where you have gone wrong. Me and Xavi have worked together quite often, we are open to, say if something changes because someone has done something wrong, or it's just taken you that way, we can work with each other solving that on the spot.

CL-S: When you were on camera, in front of the lens, did you at any time have in your consciousness the knowledge that what you are doing will be looked at again in the future?

PF: At first I didn't think of it at all, and the it crossed my mind when I was watching the first one [replay] back, and it made me want to improve the way I was performing and I started being quite picky about what I needed to do. But then when we were doing another run I didn't think about that. I just ran it. But yeah, I think the first playback I was kind of like, oh no, I need to do this bit and then I would eel more confident in what it looks like. But then when it comes to actually doing another act I remembered the things that I wanted to improve. I didn't think loads that people were going to see it.

CL-S: You were not thinking of your future audience?

PF: No. But then I found that then I began to notice things, little things I did within doing rounds, like oh yeah, I looked around or I did something weird with my hand, and the next time I would Improve that thing and I think by the end I felt more confident.

XS: I think I didn't think about the time thing, so like, I'm going to be watched in the future. I thought about the places where people will be watching that video. I realized that when Silvia {shoot photographer] told me she's Brazilian, so I thought oh, an international student, another one involved in this project so that means maybe her family, her friends, will watch the video in Brazil. I realised I was doing this for you, your project, I realised that this is our project, this is going out on the internet, and then people will watch it in different places.

APPENDIX 13

Christopher Lewis-Smith (CL-S) interview with Chelsea McMullan (CMcM). Skype 23rd June 2016.

CL-S: Just to put it in context, This is last part of my Phd and I'm looking at the dancer/camera relationship, particularly as a *pas de deux* and I'm looking at the single take film in particular and the idea behind it that it's an uninterrupted experience for the viewer and an uninterrupted experience for the camera operator and performer, which is kind of as near as you can get to a real consciousness and there aren't that many single-take films around especially not screen dance works that I've found .

C McM: Yes, how many are there? I've never seen any other ones.

CL-S: Well I've got a list of five or something like that . . . I mean there's got to be more but . . .so that's why I'm particularly interested in Slip which is just a fab film, I really like it anyway and I've got four questions that I'd like to ask you.

C McM: Ok.

CL-S: Shall I just go ahead?

CMcM: Yes.

CL-S: The first one is a general question, which is about the challenges of making a single take film. I assume in the making of Slip, because if it goes wrong half way through, for example you have to start again and it's not like you've just done a one minute take or anything like that and I just wondered if you were able to talk freely about what challenges there were for you in making that film in that form?

C McM: Ur yes. There were a number of challenges. One is like lighting because we wanted to be able to move 360 in the space so everything had to be done overhead. The other thing was the choreography, making sure everyone sort of hit their marks and especially as we were working with like non-dancers, not professional dancers; there were some professional dancers but 90% were non-dancers. What else, the other thing was really just if anyone made a mistake and no take was perfect; I think we did thirteen takes, only took the eighth take. In every take there was either a mistake in the choreography or there was a mistake in something technical. If it was a big enough, noticeable enough mistake, we'd cut the take just so we wouldn't sort of go through it. I think those were sort of the biggest challenges; the execution of the choreography and the technical side of things and the choreography coming together and just trying to limit as many mistakes in achieving what we want. But then also at the same time I feel there's like a fun surprise and some of the mistakes are I think are interesting. Like recently, I guess it's kind of weird because I made this film like right out of film school, ten years ago now and then it's recently this site based in UK Nowness asked me to go back a choose a different take and re-release it, so it's only recently that I went back and I watched all the takes again and it was so fun to do actually, I really enjoyed the experience and to choose another take and as there's mistakes now as there were mistakes in the one that was the initial film but

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they're all sort of films within themselves and they're all beautiful and have their mistakes which kind of lend themselves to something interesting.

CL-S: What about focus? Was there a focus puller or was in on auto-focus or is it a very deep field of focus with the camera?
C McM: No we just, er, honestly we had the best steadicam op I've ever worked with and the best focus puller I've ever worked worked with. They were the only two people in the space, everyone else was in another room watching from a monitor, and they killed it, I still don't really know how they did it.

CL-S: So they must have worked together and moved around in a way that the focus puller was always behind the camera operator and he or she must have been part of the dance really?

C McM: Yeah well they definitely were. They were very much a part of the choreography. There's even a point in the film where you see a hand that reaches out. That's the focus puller. She had to engage with the dancer.

CL-S: Was that deliberate?

C McM: Deliberate in the sense of the relationship between the dancer and the camera at that particular moment.

CL-S: Yes.

C McM: Yes, the hand motion was part of the choreography, so it was deliberate as we always felt that the camera was like a dancer. For me the camera is part of the audience but the audience is a part of the dance.

C L-S: I showed the film to a group of students and they were really intrigued with the identity of the camera. They discussed whether it was a man or a woman who was operating the camera. Their perception was that they could hear breathing and they thought that the breathing sounded like a woman's breathing. There's the obvious context of it being in a woman's changing room and none of the women are actually paying any

attention to this person, but of course it's also a film set and we know that as well. I don't know whether you just wanted it to happen or whether you wanted there to be any kind of gender issues around the camera operator/audience, you just said it feeds back to the audience, we become the camera in a sense.

C McM: Yeah, something that is important to my work, and the work of other people is this idea of the female gaze and the way women look at other women. The cinematographer in the film was a woman, most of the key creative were women. I think it's really interesting to develop this counter female gaze, and the way that, if the gaze were a male gaze the people in the changing room would have reacted to the camera, it would have been different. I have seen it as being a female gaze, probably representative of myself. Yeah and have an audience watch what's going on in a change room through the eyes of like a female gaze verses a sexualized gaze.

CL-S: When you made the work did you make it and rehearse it all in that space or did you make work outside and then relocate it? Did you practice somewhere else with a measured up space or did you have that space all the time?

C McM: It was all rehearsed in the space. There was one rehearsal ahead of the shoot. Then we had a rehearsal ahead of actually doing the take, on the same day. It's a really interesting space. It's in Toronto and it's the only free public bathing facility in Ontario I think, so it attracts an interesting cross section of people so a lot of it is based on the people who actually go to the pool, through stories of people who work there and the choreographer had actually done a live piece in the space which is what this piece was inspired by. It was open when they were rehearsing, and the woman with the dyed hair was based on an actual woman who walked in while they were rehearsing the live piece and dyed her hair red. My background is documentary so I really like to incorporate mixed reality and something more like hyper-reality. So until the pool was open until five, we could only get into the place after five, so we actually shot through the night. We wrapped at four a.m. or something.

CL-S: Did the lens of the camera not steam up in that watery misty environment?

C McM: That's a good question. It was so long ago now that I don't remember. I remember that it was specifically a problem or if it was a problem how we dealt with it. But it doesn't stand in my mind as something we dealt with.

If I remember correctly it wasn't so hot and we used a smoke machine to get that effect. So I don't remember it being that hot which might be the answer.

CL-S: Thank you very much.

APPENDIX 14

LOOKING BOXES

A SUMMARY OF THE DESIGN AND APPLICATION OF 'LOOKING BOXES' IN THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF SCREENDANCE MAKING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

THE BOXES

Looking Boxes are a simple device designed for Higher Education student learning in screendance making. Their application supports awareness of composition and framing the body in practical explorations.

The Boxes are designed to approximately replicate the experience of viewing images through a camera viewfinder (as opposed to an LCD camera screen). The design allows the user to view a limited area without any peripheral visual information. Importantly, They assist the removal of visual texts that may be represented by the wider dancer's environment (i.e. architecture, landscape, other dancers, studio space, clutter, etc) supporting the viewer to isolate the dancing body, or parts of the dancing body, in a visual environment similar to that of a viewfinder.

Many cameras have an LCD screen but no viewfinder. This results in a different 'camera looking' experience as the viewfinder is positioned in a wider field of vision that brings with it the texts of the environment beyond the frame. Cameras that have the viewfinder option tend to be more expensive, making them less easily resourced for the classroom. They are also heavier and may tend be used with caution owing to their value and the possibility of knocking against other dancers in close proximity work. An advantage of the Looking Boxes is that they are very easy to manipulate, enabling the student to move around freely,

using different viewing angles, levels, and positions. They are low cost, easily replaceable, and easily transportable. The design covers both eyes and the side of the sides of the face, completely isolating the viewed images.

Figure 74. Looking Box being used at Mills College, California.

The Looking Boxes, as constructed by the author, are made from lightweight black cardboard fastened with black dance floor tape. They represent a box without a lid (fig 5). The side-walls of the box measure 5 cm high and the base, or face, of the box measures 25 cm x 12cm (fig 4). The long sides of the box are cut with a curve in order for them to fit the face (fig 1). Two apertures are cut into the face of the box, each roughly in line with one of the eyes of the user (fig 4). The apertures measure approximately 10mm x 5.5mm landscape and 4mm x 2mm landscape. When looking through the apertures these represent roughly a 100mm and 35mm camera lens respectively. The boxes are designed to fold flat (fig 3). 15 boxes fit into a cardboard holder measuring 28 cm x 12.5cm x 5.5cm, approximately the size of a single typical DSLR camera body, without lens (fig 6). The

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boxes are reusable and have, at the time of writing, been used for 5 workshops without significant damage.

1. Template   2. Side   3. Folded, back view
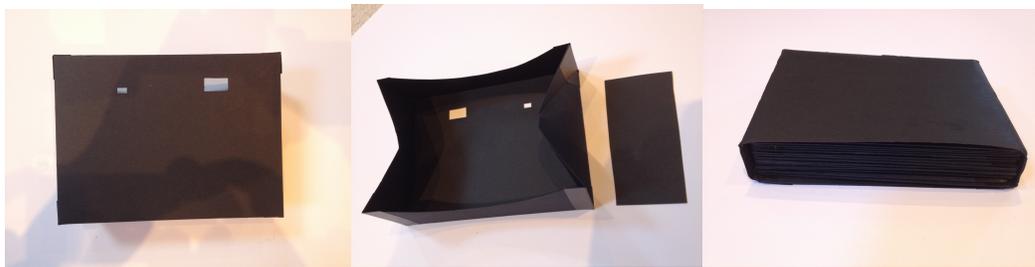
4. Front view   5. Unfolded with blanking card 6. Pack of 15 boxes

Figure 75. Construction of a Looking Box.

The user places the box over their face and opens one eye of the other depending on which aperture he or she wishes to look through. The boxes also come with a small piece of black 'blanking' card. As an alternative means of looking through one hole or the other, the card can be held by a finger pressed to the front of the box and used in the style of a car windscreen wiper to block one aperture or the other.

WORKSHOPS

The Looking Boxes are a central element of a workshop entitled ' A Different way of looking'. At the time of writing documented workshops have been run four times.

Workshop 1. 21/10/13. Roger Williams University, Rhode Island USA. Duration 2 hours. Participants: 30 undergraduate dancers, mixed year groups. Space: dance studio.

Workshop 2. 23/10/13. University of Wisconsin, USA. Duration 1 hour and 40 minutes. Participants 28 mixed year undergraduate and graduate dancers. Space: dance studio.

Workshop 3. 25/10/13. Mills College, California. Duration 2 hours 25 minutes. participants 4 post graduate dancers, one dance professional, and 1 undergraduate dancer. Space: dance studio.

Workshop 4. 2/11/13. Bath Spa University, England. Duration 2 hours. Participants: 14 graduates and undergraduates from Bath Spa University and Roger Williams University. Space: dance studio.

Workshop objectives: To encourage dancers to explore alternative ways of viewing the moving body, beyond the usual sitting or standing eye level position, and to encourage a 'different way of looking'. Viewing space is restricted as a means of creating an altered relationship between the body, the viewer, and the environment in which it is viewed. Specifically, to use the restriction of a frame to: increase the ratio of the body against its environment, lessen the amount of visual information surrounding the body, and to re-specify the relationship of the body to the environment by restricting the environmental imagery. In addition, to support consideration of composition within a frame, particularly the notion that the edge of the frame is a zone that may be used to enhance awareness of what the viewer cannot see, and give visual credence to the remaining space, whatever that may be. Detail of the workshop design can be found in appendix 1.

OBSERVATIONS

The Looking Boxes derive from my research, The Dancer and the Looking Glass. The Boxes emerged out of findings from 'Lab 1', a series of production experiments which originated from the proposition that, within the broad range of practice used in the filming of dance improvisation, the relationship between lens, camera operator/director and dancer is one in which production control predominately favours the camera operator/director. Findings from 'Lab 1' led to an exploration of the edges of the frame in the viewing of the

dancing body on screen. The workshop, 'A Different Way of Looking', supports students to explore these edges in a contained visual world that excludes peripheral visual information.

Figure 76. A Different Way of Looking. Workshop. Mills College, Oakland, California.

More stills with workshop music can be found at: http://youtu.be/u-yi6F6XYsM

The area of 'blackness' surrounding the viewing aperture of a camera viewfinder will vary depending on the camera. It will however represent a significant proportion of the field of vision and as such what might be, but cannot be seen.

American photographer Alfred Stieglitz (1864-1946) created a series of images of clouds. Four of these early photographs, currently hanging in The Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco, are mounted behind a wide border (fig 70).

Figure 77. Alfred Steiglitz. Gelatin silver prints. 1927. Contemporary Jewish Museum. San Francisco.

The pictures demand close scrutiny and give a sense of their being a glimpse only of a wider skyscape that the mounting denies the viewer. The Looking Boxes create the same effect as the presentation of these early photos, encouraging scrutiny of a small area by denying the viewer the wider picture, but hinting at a bigger picture. Dancers move into, and then back out of, the frame, their dancing whereabouts then unknown until they return into view. The surprise entry into the screen of a shoulder or limb lets the viewer know that the remains of the body is there but unseen, and perhaps even the identity of the dancer is unknown.

There are a number of differences between the Looking Boxes and a camera LCD screen or viewfinder. One is that the edges of the viewing frame in the boxes are blurred to the eye. This is a consequence of the aperture being so close to the eye and could be perceived as a negative aspect of the looking experience as it did not replicate the frame of a viewfinder or screen. No negative comments however were made regarding this in workshop feedback. The 'effect' of the viewed images having a soft edge was commented on by users from University of Wisconsin Madison. In a discussion at UWM on 23rd October 2013, Postgraduate student Henry Holmes commented on how the blurred edges in some way reflected the act of 'unfettered' viewing. He suggested that the blurring off at the edges

of the frame reflected the way our attention is less concentrated on imagery in our peripheral vision. Professor Douglas Rosenberg, in the same discussion, noted that the effect replicated the Victorian photographic tradition of softening the peripheries of a photographic image, especially portraits. This tradition endures through 'effects' available on digital photography software such as i photo.

A crucial difference between a camera and a Looking Box is weight and texture. Where a camera is hard and heavy, and could injure a dancer who might collide with it, the looking boxes are light and soft.

> *'I felt that having something that wasn't fragile allowed us a new perspective and angles to kind of work with the camera it's so fragile I feel that it's really inhibiting of movement or possible angles. The Looking Box kind of allowed me to get into new angles and places that I wouldn't usually get into'.* Heather Stockton, Mills College California

Dancer feedback on using the boxes reveals that the boxes do indeed promote a 'different way of looking'. A number of dancers revealed how using the boxes was a learning experience and supported them to view the dancing body in a new way.

> *'It really compelled a certain honesty in the way that we watch dance. We often trick ourselves into thinking we can see everything that is happening but really you can only experience that frame that is within your actual internal focus and narrow perspective, and you actually have to look at it and there's nowhere else to see and I thought that was really compelling because it taught me something about the way I look at dance without a sort of frame in front of it. And it also, sort of, I had to reconsider my values because I realised that what I wanted to see was actually a little bit more like this than the way I usually watch dance and that taught me something about how I look at the dancer.'* Post grad student Henry Holmes from University of Wisconsin Madison.

> *'In terms of like movement vocabulary it was very interesting because things that might have not necessarily translated as well on a stage per say or what ever, depending on what stage was, it just, it looked much different inside the little box.'* Ashleyanne Brown from Roger Williams University

'Obviously dance is usually viewed as a large perception of a big space, whether you are in a classroom or on stage where there are multiple dancers or a solo dancer and you can see everything they are doing. But it segmented it and made the details very particular.' Kristin Giddings from Roger Williams University.

'And it was exciting to see the architecture in a whole new way….. taking out the choice of what's on the periphery and really defining what you're looking at'. Heather Stockton. Mills College California.

A number of students commented on how framing the dancer through the looking boxes became a significant part of the experience of using them. Whilst the same might be the case whilst viewing through a camera viewfinder, the boxes hold no possibility of actually recording what is seen. The absence of this agenda may support looking as the primary activity, with no concerns as to when and how often to press the record button, and whether the camera is 'set up' correctly for recording. Typically, in the workshops run, a dancer may spend 20 minutes with looking as the sole activity.

'Of course I really enjoyed putting Heather, my subject, in different pats of the frame but then once I started incorporating elements of the actual architecture of the room and the light that was just naturally hitting some of these brown wood window frames. That sort of created frames within frames and complimented the movement of her body very nicely'. Megan Meyer, Mills College California.

'So there were things like that. Compositional things that I didn't expect, I just thought 'I'm getting closer' but then suddenly there was a whole series of tugs going this way and horizontal reinforcement in the frame that was going on and I thought wow, that's very nice. And I think that the other thing that was especially pleasing, just playing the game of anticipating where she's going to go, and look, she's going in that direction and I'll set the frame up before she gets there and then let her enter the frame and exit'. Shinichi Lova-Koga, Mills College California.

'…and it was really interesting to watch and also her body sliding down that way and I was basically moving up her body without actually having to move, she was sliding into the frame so I would see her legs and then her hips and then finally her face came into the frame and it gave like, these, like, just like her feet and her body gave it all of a sudden person to attest it to, it personified all that movement and I

saw her face come into the frame'. Rebecca Johnstone. University of Wisconsin Madison.

'I really appreciated how it was able to focus my attention and I really could say ok I want to see what looks like seeing Shannon through this series of the metal fixtures along the bar and setting up those lines and really being able to focus and not have some of this extra clutter interfering with that so I could really see the movement coming in and out'. Warren Barnes, Mills College, California.

'…she's like in and out of the frame too and I was like, even some of the pictures that were the most interesting were when there wasn't even a dancer on the stage'. Joyce Gafni. University of Wisconsin Madison.

'There would be a lot of times where she would be out of my view and I could just see her in the mirror and I would always kinda get that anticipation feeling like, when is she going to come back?' Kayleigh Kiso. University of Wisconsin Madison.

'I think they were helpful, the boxes helped me focus on what parts we were focussing on. And sort of how, drawing in the focus changes what the dances meaning to the viewer'. Grace Dean. University of Wisconsin Madison.

The 'Different Way Of Looking' workshops lead to the making of short videos by the dancers. A variety of video recorders were used ranging from mobile phones to DSLR cameras with video facilities. The videos were posted on the Face Book page 'Dance and the Looking Glass' during October and November 2013. Links to a sample of nine of the videos are given here. The videos are characterised by largely steady camera work, mid to close up shots of the dancing body, Considered framing of dancers in environment, and, in some, the use of the sideways camera. The single most common attribute might be the isolation of sections of the dancing body within the frame. It is not possible to know the degree to which the use of the Looking Boxes might be attributed to this but it would seem a reasonable correlation to make, particularly in the light of student feedback.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=patfAjDnSdk#t=12

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KWZJjGO9EGQ

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ru7DG6HmFek

Transcription of feedback after the Looking Box exercise at University of Wisconsin. 23/10/13

Hi I'm Kelsey Larnho (unclear last name), and er, something I really liked when I was looking through the, looking boxes, that was there were two dancers and they suddenly were in sync but neither of them were looking at each other and they were doing the same movement. That was kind of cool so I figured that they probably saw someone across the room and they were taking that person's movement *(a reference to the improvisation structure that allows dancers to take each other's movement material)* but it was really weird because they were like (unclear) in common and they were doing this like exact same movement but neither were facing each other so it was kind of weird like. That happened.

CL-S. D. Do you think that you might not have noticed that if you were not using a looking box?

Kelsey. Um, I don't know, I think it made it more interesting to me because it was as if they were just, they were just on the same wavelength almost. And because I couldn't see if they were following someone else which I was assuming that was what was happening.

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But, it like pulled my eye and it stood out to me really strong because there was something there that was happening.

I'm Grace Dean. Things I found that was most interesting and sort of I think they were helpful, the boxes helped me focus on what parts we were focussing on. And sort of how, drawing in the focus changes what the dances meaning to the viewer. Like at one point I was watching the feet and then your hands came down to the ground and then it became this dance about, for me your nail polish because it contrasted so much to the floor (unclear) lime green. Anyway it sort of made, that that's what I wanted to follow and it sort of added a narrative because of what I was looking at. And then sort of separate from then It became less about you dancing and less about the experience of watching and more about what was going on in your movement and what parts of your body. A new way to look at it.

I'm Jamie Agana (unclear last name). One thing I thought was interesting was the camera angles that I chose that had the mirror in the background. So, I was looking through the really small hole but (unclear name) was out there and she was dancing. I would loose her a lot of the time but I would see her full movement in the back ground and then she would come in and I could, use my eyes could focus in on her up close and get (unclear) what she was really doing but in the back I could actually see the whole (something) that was a contrast.

I'm Sarah I think one of the most interesting moments for me was, I was using the very small lens I was watching my dancer, just a part of her leg, and sometimes an arm came through and a narrative started happening with just arms and legs.

I'm Henry Holmes, I thought it really compelled a certain honesty in the way that we watch dance. We often trick ourselves into thinking we can see everything that is happening but really you can only experience that frame that is within your actual internal focus and narrow perspective, and you actually have to look at it and there's nowhere else to see and I thought that was really compelling because it taught me something about the way I look at dance without a sort of frame in front of it. And it also, sort of, I had to reconsider my values because I realised that what I wanted to see was actually a little bit more like this than the way I usually watch dance and that taught me something about how I look at the dancer.'

Hi I'm Kate Jordan what I found, was like, the thing that stood out the most for me using this was just like watching dance, is that, It seemed more intimate. It did seem like I was watching a movie, like when ever you watch dance movies or documentaries it's a really intimate feeling because they do that because they look at just their leg, and so it was cool to be doing that in like, live time. And it makes me wonder like if this could be a thing that people would do at performances or you know, something like that. It would be really cool.

CL-S. Perhaps I could sell them!

Kate. I think it would be cool. It might take people a lot of time to accept it. You're have to explain what you were trying to do because they would say 'what are you talking about?

CL-S. There is a parallel in opera glasses.

Hi I'm Joyce Gafni. I think the thing that stood out most for me was; I feel that for all my life dance is about creating pictures. But what we just did, those pictures were so just atypical to what pictures of dance that I have always been accustomed to and what I believed is a picture so it was really cool that I was able to make it more like photography where I was like, ok here's Kate's hand and here's like wherever! Rebecca, she's like in and out of the frame too and I was like, even some of the pictures that were the most interesting were when there wasn't even a dancer on the stage, I guess there's like nothing, was cool.

I'm Rebecca Johnstone. Um I was going to say like my favourite part was kind of similar to what Sarah was talking about was like the emergence of the dancer almost like the only thing that I could see for a second was just Grace's feet, pointing and flexing and it was really interesting to watch and also her body sliding down that way and I was basically moving up her body without actually having to move, she was sliding into the frame so I would see her legs and then her hips and then finally her face came into the frame and it gave like, these, like, just like her feet and her body gave it all of a sudden person to attest it to, it personified all that movement and I saw her face come into the frame. It was just so cool to be able to put all these different parts together. It was really cool to see her whole body emerge into the frame. It bought it all together really nicely.

I'm Kayleigh Kiso and I did something similar to what Jamie did I was watching Courtney through the mirrors and I would only see part of her body but I could see her entire body dancing through the mirror. It made it really interesting and exciting to have such a narrow viewpoint and there would be a lot of times where she would be out of my view and I could just see her in the mirror and I would always kinda get that anticipation feeling like, when is she going to come back? And at one point she was out of my view and I could only see her in the mirror and Melissa rolled right in front of me and her face was right in front of my eye and it was almost jolting like, and it scared me a little bit and it was really exciting to see that because normally when you can just sit and pan and look at everyone you don't, you don't get those feelings of excitement because you can kind of see it's not as much of a surprise, so! It's really cool.

CL-S. Thank very much for that. It's really interesting feedback.

Transcription of feedback after the Looking Box exercise at Mills College, Oakland California. 25/10/13. 6 dancers. Dance studio.

I'm Sofia Colminares, I found myself trying to discover when to move with the dance, like what kind of movements would work best with that and then when to let the body come in and out of the frame. And it, and how like the orientation could dissect the body in some way. Yeah, I experimented with rolling on the floor, like 360. I enjoyed things coming in and out of the frame. Especially like extremities.

I'm Megan Meyer. Of course I really enjoyed putting Heather, my subject, in different pats of the frame but then once I started incorporating elements of the actual architecture of the room and the light that was just naturally hitting some of these brown wood window frames. That sort of created frames within frames and complimented the movement of her body very nicely and then of course these mirrors here there was this nice sort of dance moment because you were doubled, and all of your movement was hyper-symmetrical because everything was perfectly reflected in the mirror. That was a fun thing to explore.

Shinichi Lova-Koga. I felt there was a lot of lucky happens dance from the camera point of view. Things I just didn't expect but they were there. And I think, er, I think that one step was recognising that something lucky had happened. And then the second one was staying with the lucky thing and going -ok- at first it was luck and now I'm staying with it and enjoying how this luck plays out. So, I had a moment at the very beginning, like that, where

I was up against the wall and one of the little chord was like just coming in and out and then I just let my own eye be like a camera lens and focus on the dancer or focus on this little chord and it was interesting that, why would this little box on my eye really does that in a more camera like way than in an eye like way. So that was really fun just to play with that. I had a little moment of thinking, wow, I wish I could get a camera to switch back and forth so accurately and quickly. So there were things like that. Compositional things that I didn't expect, I just thought 'I'm getting closer but then suddenly there was a whole series of tugs going this way and horizontal reinforcement in the frame that was going on and I thought wow, that's very nice. And I think that the other thing that was especially pleasing, just playing the game of anticipating where she's going to go, and look, she's going in that direction and I'll set the frame up before she gets there and then let her enter the frame and exit. That was more like a game. But it was also really, still startling every time. To have nothing and then to see something come in, something come in very large, like in here, or whatever. Now. That's it.

My name is Shannon Stubblefield. I find this was like a good exercise for finding the right facing you know how you would want to pick up dancer images I ended up going back to the same spot five times which was this really strong diagonal behind Lauren and it was like so beautiful I like played with that. Down. And none of the other spots really compared to that one. So it was a really good way to find exactly where I would set up the camera . Yeah. I defiantly second what Megan said about framing and something she said about a camera nearby. Really nice, really beautiful.

I'm Warren Barnes. Yeah, I want to reiterate, but a lot of it I really appreciated how it was able to focus my attention and I really could say ok I want to see what looks like seeing Shannon through this series of the metal fixtures along the bar and setting up those lines and really being able to focus and not have some of this extra clutter interfering with that so I could really see the movement coming in and out and kind of, I was at the very end so you became this kind of a blurr and I could just see kind of your clothing move and it was this organic thing at the end of this very structured tunnel. One thing was that I wanted it to keep going because I would find a position that I liked and then I wouldn't want to leave but then it would be like, well, ok, I want to see something else so I guess I'll run over here, um, so, yeah, it was just not wanting to leave certain angles. And happy accidents, it was something I was getting closer when you were in the light and I happened to get, I think I switched to the smaller frame, right as you did something with your hand to the ground

near your foot, and it just captured that, yeah, so it was interesting playing with those moments, and I started doing a little bit of the open closed with myself, so not just blocking one side, but then with whatever I was viewing going in and out to see how I could shock my own perception knowing that you were, like I was stationary, but yeah.

CL-S. Can I just ask one question? Which is that when you look through the Looking Boxes the apertures are blurry round the edges. Unlike an LCD screen. Did that trouble anyone, or was it something interesting, I just wonder if that was something that even bothers you?

My names Heather Stockton. And I only noticed the blurred edge on the smaller frame so it's interesting to go back and forth and see the more sharp focused bigger lens and then going back to the smaller frame. I felt that compositionally it was an interesting filter to look through and just kind of pinging back off from the last discussion, um, kind of similar to what we were talking about earlier. I felt that having something that wasn't fragile allowed us a new perspective and angles to kind of work with the camera it's so fragile I feel that it's really inhibiting of movement or possible angles. The Looking Box kind of allowed me to get into new angles and places that I wouldn't usually get into. And it was exciting to see the architecture in a whole new way like Megan was saying and taking out the choice of what's on the periphery and really defining what you're looking at. And then the moving in and out of the frame was really exciting.

CL-S. Generally speaking, I wonder if you were aware if you used the smaller aperture of the bigger aperture most. A show of hands for the smaller aperture.

No overall preference came from this question.

Transcription of feedback after the Looking Box exercise at Bath Spa University. 2nd November 2013. The workshop included 15 undergraduates and graduates from Bath Spa and Roger Williams Universities.

My name is Paul, Paul Davies. Um, I think it was ally interesting because it really did give you an aspect of how the camera would have taken that information that you were seeing

and I felt that it really gave you a different insight on how to use a camera for me, because I have never been really good with cameras. So I felt that it created a kind of portrait, it just came in, for me when I was focussing in on the dancers I was with, it really created a more focus on the centre, depending on which one you went with but I preferred the smaller square because for me it created a more personal insight into what they were doing. And I think that's me.

Annabelle Pettitt. Um, there was a moment when I was on the floor I was looking up and the two girls that I was looking, the two girls were separated out, and I closed one eye and I could see just your like upper body and arms in that frame then when I closed that eye I could see um, because it was higher up, I could see everything. Um, you know, further away. So it was really nice I was flicking between the two. And then, well, there was a moment when you both just left the space and there was Paul in the background, like shaking and bouncing, and it was really nice even though he wasn't one of my dancers. It was still really nice that they had just gone and you could see like an arm but then Paul was just like left in the middle. That was really cool. And then one other moment as well I was looking through the little tiny one and it was just your arms and you were just playing and it was just two hands playing, a bit like in Marini's when we do that. It was just really really nice. So yeah, good.

Leanne Oddy. I found it really interesting when there was nothing in the space because I felt like you could pick, you could like, from what you saw before nothing, then what came into the nothing you sort of made it up in your head what was going on out of the space, with the blank space there. And sometimes it was like simple like it was just walking up the body and you'd miss out the bottom bit and then you'd come back up so you kind of knew, and sometimes it would be that they were like jumped in and then perform like, finding out, and then you'd make up what gone on out of the frame at that point.

Ashleyanne Brown. I thought in terms of like movement vocabulary it was very interesting because things that might have not necessarily translated as well on a stage per say or what ever, depending on what stage was, it just, it looked much different inside the little box and, I don't know, things that like, things that after I watched, oh I watched could have moved differently after seeing you guys do it because it went last and just to see it after to see what really translates through the little box thing in comparison to like what I think is

like cool dance moves. And also I thought it was interesting, our lovely friend who was walking round taking pictures, I was always like, every time your like feet were

just standing still somewhere I was just like, oh man, she's here right now because you were like were standing there and I could see your feet and I really liked, it was just like a random person doing nothing.

I'm Chelsea Esher. And I enjoyed using the looking boxes because I'm very curious about focussing like if your looking at somebody but not having them centre so I enjoyed being able to position myself from the beginning um, Annabel and Louise off centre so when they would move around it might be just an arm or a foot that would come into the frame and given that we are just in the studio right now made me really curious as to when they weren't in the frame, like obviously the background was the studio but, compared to outside or like another space. I think it would be really interesting to have them not be there and they might be like a tree, and like, there comes a hand, there comes a foot, so it made me curious about what else could be done. In aspect of framing the environment and the set where they were dancing.

Kristin Giddings. What I felt was really interesting was, I felt as if it changed dancing. Cos obviously dance is usually viewed as a large perception of a big space, whether you are in a classroom or on stage where there are multiple dancers or a solo dancer and you can see everything they are doing. But it segmented it and made the details very particular and very interesting so if you were just looking at a hand or something you could see the movement of fingers, or just the feet you could see what each foot and stuff was doing or what ever part you segmented was your sole focus whereas if your whole body is moving you are watching as a whole so it was interesting to see how it changed how you view dance.

Tony Di Maria. Um, when I was looking through like the small one in particular, I could, I was focussing more on detail, whereas when you are just watching it now, you just don't really take in and notice the details that are there. And then what you are focussed on you start, you like, are able to see like bones and muscles and stuff moving, because it's focussed on that area so you are taking in more from the actual um, what you're seeing

rather than just looking at it, taking it in, and not using any detail. Also it just highlights like really nice moments as well that are very spontaneous as well. My name is Louise Benkelman. I think one of my, I started thinking about, when I was over here, I could see light and shadows and stuff. One of my favourite moments was, I was down really low and I kind of got, um, only a little bit of their actual bodies in and a lot of the floor and like all their shadows. And if you were laying there you couldn't see as much because it was blocking the light but then if they got up it would just be like two hands interacting and you could see like all the shadows and that was really cool. And I think it was interesting to see like more dynamic changes, I feel, because if you are watching the whole body you can see maybe like different dynamics in your port de bras in your legs but if you are just looking at someone's hands you just see just like every little tiny motion.

CL-S. Do you think that looking through the looking boxes it made you more aware of those things that you might not have been aware of if you in the wide world of your own vision?

Louise Benkelman. Yeah. But then I think it also made me kind of wonder like what the other parts of their body were doing. If I just saw their hands I was wondering, like, what everything was like.

Note, UWM recorded an almost even use of the large and the small aperture. Slightly more used the large. Mills recoded the opposite.

WORKSHOP DESIGN

1. Warm up activity to prepare dancers to move and to find a working focus.

2. An improvisation exercise that generates movement material and provides students with a framework in which they are able to maintain improvisation for the exercises 3, 4, and 5, without overly repeating movement vocabulary that emerges and may become fixed.

3. Exercise 1. An exercise developed by dance artist Kirsty Simpson and filmmaker Katrina

McPherson (used with their permission). Working in threes, participants choose a role each, that of dancer, camera operator, or camera. While the dancer dances, camera operator leads the camera, who's eyes are closed, into a number of positions in the room from which he or she has sight line with the dancer. The camera operator instructs the camera to open and close their eyes using the words 'open' and 'closed'. Camera operator leads camera into a number of viewing positions of which the camera is unaware until instructed to look. A short feedback session between individual groups precedes a change of roles. This is repeated once again allowing all group members to experience each role in the exercise.

4. Exercise 2. In pairs, one dancer uses a Looking Box to observe the other. Dancers are encouraged to view from a variety of distances, levels, and places. Once the box is pointing in the correct direction, viewers are recommended to remain static for a period allowing the dance to happen within the frame, or not, without attempting to track it. For this exercise the dancer chooses the environment in which he or she performs. This may be anywhere in the workshop space, and may be outside of it if practical and safe. After a given period each pair changes roles and the process is repeated. On conclusion of the exercise there follows group feedback session in the round.

5. Exercise 3. The Looking Boxes are replaced with cameras and the same exercise is repeated, informed by findings from the Looking Box experience. Cameras may be anything from cell phones to high-end devices. For the exercise, cameras must be as locked off as possible. This may be done with a tripod, or with the camera braced against the wall or similar, or placed on the floor. Ways of holding small devices are demonstrated to students if their desired viewing positions a have no bracing option. Participants are encouraged to take short takes from a variety of angles. Feedback follows.
6. Screening of a short edited video that demonstrates how students might edit the work if they wish although they are free to manipulate the captured video in any way they want. It is acknowledged that not all students have access to, or the skills to use, editing software. All students from the 4 workshops have accomplished this last stage and posted their videos on a Face Book page, Dance and the Looking Glass, which exists to support this workshop and other screendance making activity.